RAISING AND TRAINING THE NEW ARMIES

CAPTAIN BASIL WILLIAMS

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BY

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"The zest such knowledge will impart to all
Is worth the risk of leakages."

Napoleon, in Thomas Hardy's *Dynasts*.

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PREFACE

"Our Expeditionary Force numbered, at the beginning of the war, 160,000 men. Our Expeditionary Forces to-day number over 3,000,000—probably the greatest feat of military organization in the history of the world. . . . The raising and training of our New Army was an unexampled feat, and will always be associated with the name—the great name—of Lord Kitchener."

Thus spoke the Prime Minister in moving the vote of thanks from the House of Commons to the officers, non-commissioned officers and men of the British Armies in the Field.

The aim of this volume is to give some indication of the way in which we accomplished what the Prime Minister has justly called "the greatest feat of military organization in the history of the world"; how, while fighting with all the trained men we had, we were gradually raising and training the vast armies which have proved as little contemptible in size or achievement as the original expeditionary force was in achievement. It does not pretend to be exhaustive. Although I have attempted to give a general survey of the methods of enlistment and training and of the organization of the New Armies, I have perforce been obliged to leave for the present untouched, except

incidentally, many important topics, such as the growth of the Flying Corps, the Artillery, the Engineers, the R.A.M.C., the Army Service Corps and the whole supply system. Enough, however, has, I hope, been given in these pages to reflect something of our just national pride in what has been accomplished. The armies that were being raised and trained while the old Army and the Territorials were spending themselves at Mons, Le Cateau, Ypres, Neuve Chapelle and Loos have proved worthy of these and other glorious traditions of the British Army. The Somme, the Ancre, Arras, Messines, Wytschaete and the Ypres ridge are their witnesses.

BASIL WILLIAMS.

London,
November, 1917.

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PART I

THE RECRUITING PROBLEM

CHAPTER I

THE FIRST RUSH

THE contribution made by Great Britain to the Allies' cause by her Fleet, her financial aid, her creation of a vast munitions industry, and by the trade materials and food supplies which she either produces or conveys in her ships to support herself and her friends in the struggle—all that is becoming gradually understood on the continent of Europe and in America. But what is less understood even now is the success with which Great Britain within three years has increased a military force of some half a million men, all told, to armies which are reckoned in millions, armies which have proved themselves worthy to inherit the traditions of that "contemptible little army" which sacrificed itself so heroically at Mons, Le Cateau, and on the Marne.

The raising of these new armies is a subject of some interest to Americans, since the circumstances, and even to some extent the methods, of their raising have no other historical parallel so close as those to be found in American history still within the living memory of the older American citizens. During the American Civil War both forces started with "contemptible little armies," the South for various reasons less so than the North, while by the end of the war

a very large proportion of the men of military age on both sides had been brought into the Service. The South adopted compulsion almost from the first, and, more than a year before the end of the war, had passed a law that all able men between seventeen and fifty should serve. The North, which had twice the population of the South to draw upon, lagged far behind its adversary in this respect. It started with a Regular army of some 16,000 men, so scattered, however, that only about 3,000 were immediately available. Seventy-five thousand Militia were also raised for three months' service, the utmost to which they were legally liable. But Lincoln, foreseeing that the war would not be over in three months, called for a new army of volunteers engaged to serve for three years, and within a few months 300,000 of these had joined the colours. Then, after the war had been running a year, the War Minister, Stanton, actually stopped recruiting and dispersed his recruiting staff, because he did not know how to dispose of the recruits that came in, though serious reverses soon caused him to alter this suicidal policy; but it was two years before a form of compulsion much less strict than in the South was passed by Congress. Its direct effect was not very great, for before its passing there were some 861,000 men under arms for the North, or about one in twenty-seven of the population, while at the end of the war there were only 120,000 more, bringing the proportion up to one in twenty-five of the population; its main effect was in stimulating voluntary enlistment, which went on simultaneously, and in creating a reserve of 2,000,000 enrolled men ready to be called up if necessary.

To turn now to the circumstances of the present war. The Regular Army, including Reserves and Special Reserves (the old Militia), on mobilization amounted to about 450,000 men; the Territorial Force, only partly trained and not liable, except as volunteers, for foreign service, contributed some 250,000 more. But of these 700,000 men over 100,000 were serving in India or other foreign stations, so that for the defence of the United Kingdom and for an expeditionary force only about 600,000 men were available, more than half of whom were not fully trained. So little had the country dreamed of aggressive warfare, so much had it relied on the Fleet for any defensive measures that might be necessary.

From the outset Kitchener, like Lincoln, realized that the war would be one of years, not of months, as some complacently thought. His first action on going to the War Office was to call for volunteers for three years' service or the duration of the War. Here again, as in the case of the United States, it was thought advisable not to bring the recruits specially raised for the war into any of the old organizations of the Regular Army, the Special Reserve or the Territorial Force, but to embody them into new formations called Service battalions. But by attaching these battalions to the Territorial regiments, to which the Regular and Territorial Force battalions also belong, and numbering them consecutively after the old formations, the traditions and spirit of the old army were from the beginning implanted in the Service battalions.

On August 8, 1914, Kitchener asked for 100,000 more men to start with. Within a fortnight he had

obtained them. Indeed the difficulty then was not to obtain recruits, but to deal with them as they came. The rush to enlist had begun on the very morning of Tuesday, August 4, when it was clear that, even if England did not join in the war, she would need to be ready. The officer in charge of Great Scotland Yard, the principal recruiting office in London, recalls how during the whole of the previous Saturday, August 1, he had attested only eight men; the 2nd and 3rd happened to be holidays; when he arrived early on the 4th he found a seething mass of men waiting outside the doors to be enrolled, and it took him twenty minutes, by means of the united efforts of twenty policemen, to force his way into his own office, and he was attesting men as hard as he could during the whole of that day and for very many days to come. And so it was all over Great Britain. Men of all classes, married and single, childless and with families, rich and poor, barristers, peers' sons, artists, writers, schoolmasters, working men, parsons and loafers, crowded into the recruiting offices and sometimes had to wait patiently for a whole day in the broiling sun of that August week before their turn came. Men walked twenty miles or more to a recruiting station and after enlisting would quietly lie down in a ditch for the night for want of a better sleeping place. Many were the motives no doubt which led men to enlist, "patriotism, ambition, personal courage, love of adventure, want of employment, or convenience," as Lincoln ticked them off fifty years ago. But in most parts the guiding motive was as it was expressed by many in Lancashire, who exchanged their four or five pounds a week for the King's

shilling, "I cannot stand this any longer, and must go out."

But, as Lincoln and Stanton found in America, it was one thing to stamp on the ground and call up the men; it was quite another to dispose of them when they came. Not only was our Army a small one before the war, but it had no arrangements for expansion. The recruits expected in any one year under the old system were about 30,000, and the recruiting machinery and *personnel* to secure even this number was barely adequate; in fact, less than a month before the beginning of the war, solemn conclaves were being held at the War Office to find means of improving the methods of obtaining these 30,000 in a year. Within four weeks of the declaration of war over 30,000 recruits were attested in one day. Naturally, machinery and *personnel* intended to deal with 30,000 recruits in a year broke down hopelessly when one day would bring in more than that number, especially since many of the most experienced recruiters were at once called to the Front. But the crowds who came in were not deterred from their purpose by any breakdown of machinery, and the machinery itself was quickly adjusted to the needs of the time. The War Office, faced with difficulties for which it was not and could not have been prepared, showed no hesitation in accepting the offers of business-like civilians to supply the dearth of expert recruiters. Energetic Members of Parliament armed with a scrap of Lord Kitchener's handwriting rushed forth North, South, East and West of the Kingdom to take the responsibility of doing unheard-of things quite contrary to the regulations. In one city of the

Midlands the local Member of Parliament within twenty-four hours changed the recruiting office from a poky back street to the town hall, engaged eight civilian doctors to help the one overworked medical officer to examine recruits, printed locally the sacred Army Forms for recruits, with their seventeen elaborate questions, and had the bath—to which, in the old leisurely days, each recruit had to submit—cut out of the programme. Mayors and Provosts hired or lent the largest halls they could in their own towns, improvised accommodation for the attested recruits, and organized the supply of food necessary during the hours, or even days, they had to be detained till they could be sent off to a depôt, and beat up volunteers to supplement the regular recruiting clerks, who were snowed under by the various forms, pay sheets, and other documents that required filling up. How great the need of this volunteer help to recruiters was may be gauged from the fact that at the outbreak of war some 500 persons were employed on recruiting, while at the present day this number has risen to nearly 7000.

No doubt a few men eager to enlist were allowed to slip through the recruiters' hands during these hot August days of 1914 owing to the deficiencies of staff or accommodation, but they must have been very few. The enthusiasm for enlisting was too great for many to be rebuffed, and recruiting officers, with their paid or voluntary assistants, rested neither day nor night as long as there were men presenting themselves to be attested. Happily the weather was gloriously fine, so that the hours of waiting in the street were not intolerable, while, wherever the long lines of waiting

men assembled, women and men, too old to enlist themselves, eagerly pressed on them food and drink as they wistfully watched those vigorous enough "to do their bit." In one week, the fifth of the war, 175,000 men were enlisted for the Regular Army alone; there were many more brought into the Territorial Force, and, if those rejected are included, the total presenting themselves can have been little short of 250,000 men in that one week.

But though the actual recruiting difficulty had somehow been surmounted with unexpected ease, there were still great difficulties from this sudden expansion, within a few weeks, of an army of about 500,000 men to considerably more than double that number. Preparations had been made beforehand for the pre-war establishment, and reserves of material had been accumulated. But these reserves were a drop in the ocean when it came to feeding, housing, clothing, equipping, arming, drilling, and instructing these new units of, relatively, enormous numbers. The food was to be had, indeed, but there was no organization for distributing it properly; there were no barracks, no huts, and not even enough tents for this host. The clothes, boots, and the dozens of special articles of equipment needed for all these soldiers, not to speak of their arms, would, under normal circumstances, have required years to manufacture, and even under the utmost pressure could not be produced at anything like the rate at which men were coming forward. As for the drill and instruction, the difficulties were infinitely greater.

Many of those who enlisted in those early days thought, no doubt, in their enthusiasm that they had

only to enlist to go out within a week or so to the fighting line. They little knew of the months of hard drilling that would be required before they could be passably useful soldiers. And what was bound to make the period of training longer was that not only had nearly all the officers and con-commissioned officers immediately available for drilling gone off to the Front; but, had they been there, they would not have been sufficient for the host of raw recruits. Consequently, before the recruits could all be adequately trained, the instructors and drill-sergeants themselves would have to be put through their paces.

Thus within a month the War Office was faced with the same difficulty, which faced Lincoln and Stanton after a year. They had the recruits in plenty but did not for the moment know how to dispose of them all. What was to be done? We are all wise after the event, and we can see now that had the scheme afterwards put into practice by Lord Derby been then adopted, that apparently unending stream of enthusiastic volunteers might possibly not have ceased flowing—the scheme being to send to the reserve all recruits not immediately needed, and call them up as they were required. But this course was not adopted. The War Office did not, it is true, shut up the recruiting offices, but on September 11 adopted the device of raising the standards for recruits in order to dam the stream. Unfortunately, this device was enormously successful. In the week after it was announced the recruits for the Regular Army were reduced to less than a third of the number of the previous week, and went on decreasing to less than one-ninth. But this was not the worst. This damping down of recruiting

damped down something of the fine spirit of those early days. The parrot-cry, "Business as usual," which at the beginning had seemed to some foolish persons the proper watchword for England's part in the war, came into more general favour, all the more since trade and industry began to revive, thanks to England's immense sea-power. Thus men willing and eager to go if they were needed were easily induced to believe that the country did not need everybody who was willing to go; since that was so, men willing to sacrifice everything for the country in danger began, not unnaturally, to reflect on their other responsibilities—

> "Their debts, their careful wives,
> Their children, and their sins,"

and, not least, their business. And this course of reflection, once started, was never quite stayed.

Hence, after the middle of September, we come to the second stage of recruiting, when it was necessary to stimulate the nation's ardour to serve, not indeed because they did not care, but because by this one mistake they had been misled.

CHAPTER II

THE RECRUITING RALLY

In any comparison between the military efforts of England and her Allies during the early stages of the war, it should be remembered that France and Russia were actually invaded, England was not; and that whereas France and Russia had long been accustomed to call on all their young men for hard military training, England had never done so. The effect of invasion was to make it clear as daylight to every inhabitant of the invaded country that their first business was to thrust the aggressor by the force of their manhood from the sacred territory; to Englishmen, though as grimly determined utterly to defeat the Germans, it was not at first as obvious that for the flower of the nation to be fighting in the ranks was the only, or even the best, method for them of accomplishing their object. Keeping clear the seas, and by industry providing the sinews of war, appeared to many Englishmen, no less patriotic than their Allies, to be England's chief function until events had proved that fighting men were the primary need. As an illustration of this feeling, it is interesting to note that anything that brought home to the people the reality of the German menace to civilization was better than thousands of speeches for bringing men

into the Army. The morrow of an outrage like the shelling of undefended ports or the sinking of the *Lusitania*, was always a red-letter day for the recruiting officer. Again, in the countries where conscription was the established rule, there could be no doubt about the respective claims of military and industrial service. The people of those countries had entrusted their persons to their own governments to dispose of according to well-thought-out schemes in a national emergency. England, on the other hand, whether for good or ill, had always regarded her Navy, supported by a highly trained expeditionary force of volunteers, and a half-trained voluntary force for home defence, as the utmost of her needs. Her young men, like those of the United States, are born fighters, but, like those of the United States, are not inclined to train themselves for war unless convinced of the absolute need.

After the first enthusiastic rush to the colours, already described, had been to a certain extent checked, the task of familiarizing the nation with the need of military training and military service became the most important for the Government. The initial difficulties of organization, equipment, housing, etc., for the New Armies were somehow overcome by various expedients, and it soon became possible to remove the unfortunate restrictions on recruiting. The standard for recruits was again lowered in the second month of the war and the age limit extended, and thenceforth no further attempt was made to limit the number of volunteers. With this removal of restrictions a great campaign of recruiting propaganda was started, comparable with nothing so much as the great canvassing campaigns carried on every fourth

year in America when a new President has to be chosen. But this canvassing campaign had the peculiarity that, instead of opposing parties fighting one another, the whole organizations of all the political parties of Great Britain joined in one impressive national demonstration.

In August, 1914, the Prime Minister, as head of the Liberals, and the leaders of the Unionists and the Labour Party agreed to pool all their political resources for the purpose of enlightening the nation on the needs of the war and encouraging the flow of recruits. Under the auspices of the Parliamentary Recruiting Committee, as it was called, the central party organizations in London undertook the management of this campaign in common, and enlisted the support of their local organizations in every county, city, and village in Great Britain. By this means every single voter could be reached, the special wants and the special circumstances of every locality could be estimated, and the best speakers obtained to suit the form of appeal required at any particular place. A canvass by letter of every household in the kingdom was conducted through the combined agency of rival political organizations, which a few months before had been preparing against one another for one of the bitterest political struggles within living memory. This enterprise alone meant the dispatch of some 8,000,000 letters and a huge staff of volunteers to sort out and tabulate the answers. Tories and Radicals, Labour Members and Irishmen, hardly on speaking terms before the war, toured about the country together in caravans, or made lightning journeys from the Land's End to Sutherlandshire to meet on the

same platforms or at the same street corners to address their fellow-citizens on the one question that concerned all Englishmen alike. The speakers were chiefly, as was right, men over military age, all, of course, unpaid; rich men who fretted at a moment's idleness at a time of crisis for the country, poor men who gave up their few hours' leisure or time filched from their earning, women who would have done the man's work, had they been allowed; the Prime Minister found time to deliver recruiting speeches in the four chief cities of the United Kingdom, and Mr. Lloyd George and the other political leaders followed suit. Sometimes, too, as the war went on, men wounded from the Front, who could speak of their own knowledge of the need for men in the trenches, were brought on to the platforms, and their modest eloquence was the most telling. Other volunteers, who could not speak, did silent drudgery in offices, or helped the now better organized recruiting staffs by their knowledge of neighbours and local conditions. The motorists of the kingdom, through their principal club, put their automobiles at the disposal of the War Office, either to carry speakers to recruiting meetings or to gather in recruits from outlying districts. Volunteers organized recruiting bands to accompany speakers on the march from meeting to meeting and recruits to the depôts, one of the most popular of these bands being named after Harry Lauder, who himself put in much telling work by his humour as a speaker. The hoardings of the kingdom were covered with the posters issued by the Parliamentary Recruiting Committee, some designed by great artists, some frankly sentimental—for the

English are a sentimental nation—some broadly humorous to catch the passing smile and arrest the attention of men not yet certain where their duty lay; while cinematograph theatres were utilized for the display of recruiting films and the delivery of short speeches on the war and the part which Englishmen should play. Altogether it has been reckoned that in this campaign of the Parliamentary Recruiting Committee, over 54,000,000 posters, leaflets and other publications were issued; while 12,000 meetings were held and over 20,000 speeches delivered.

The widely cast net of the Parliamentary Recruiting Committee over the whole country was supplemented by more purely local efforts, which brought some very useful formations into the army. Quite early in the war it was represented to the War Office by Lord Derby and others that a large number of men would more willingly enlist, if they could be certain of fighting shoulder to shoulder with their own friends and neighbours. Lord Kitchener at once saw the force of this plea, and, with a ready disregard of precedents, sanctioned the formation of "Pals'" battalions to be raised either by municipalities or by private individuals, who would make themselves responsible, subject of course to future repayment of the expense, for the clothing, feeding, housing and initial training of those units. The success of this scheme was very great. In the first place the War Office, at a time of considerable strain on its resources, was relieved of much of the work of recruiting and making provision for a greater number of men than it could have dealt with at that time. Moreover, the idea of men of the same town all serving together caught hold of

the people's imagination and aroused all that was best in local patriotism and emulation. The Mayor and Corporation generally constituted themselves recruiters for their towns, and the inhabitants took a personal interest in the rapid raising of their own battalions, in the high standard of clothing and equipment of the men and their comfort during training. Local landowners lent their parks as training grounds for the local units, and business men lent their warehouses as stores, orderly rooms and drill halls, and spent much time and money in perfecting the organization for the purchase of supplies or the erection of huts to shelter the men.

Liverpool seems to have the honour of starting the ball rolling with their "Pals'" battalions. On Friday, August 28, Lord Derby had a great meeting in St. George's Hall, to invite the clerks of Liverpool to form a battalion of their own. As a result of this meeting, by the following Monday two battalions of one brigade had been formed, and by the Tuesday a third. A fourth battalion for another brigade was also formed on the Monday as a result of that one meeting on the 28th, which, thus, within three days had brought in 4,000 recruits.

The correspondence between the War Office and the "raiser" of four of the Tyneside "Pals'" battalions, also tells its own tale of the enthusiasm the project aroused. On October 23 sanction was obtained for one battalion. In twenty-four hours the "raiser" telegraphed for leave to form a second. On November 1 he sent an application to raise a third, and by the 18th a fourth battalion was complete. And in this very district other local battalions were being

raised by a different agency. Gallant little Wales undertook to raise a force of 38,000 men by herself, with the help of a National Executive Committee, of which Lord Plymouth was chairman, and to which Mr. Lloyd George gave his enthusiastic approval and help. The 38th (Welsh) Division of all arms was quickly raised, together with a large supply of reserves of all arms, and, in addition, a brigade of "Bantams" composed of men under the regulation height. In many other districts, so great was the demand for this form of enlistment, the War Office sanctioned "Bantam" battalions raised locally, and eventually a whole division of the New Army was composed of these "Bantam" battalions, in which the men were from five feet to five feet three inches in height, hitherto excluded from the army. Altogether of these "Pals'" battalions and other local units, all proudly retaining the names of their places of origin in their titles, 304 were raised, viz. 172 infantry, 84 artillery, and 48 engineers. This is exclusive of the Welsh units. Newcastle alone was responsible for ten local battalions, Manchester for eight, Glasgow, Salford, and Hull for four each; while Lord Derby raised the artillery for two divisions, Colonel Meysey Thompson, M.P., and the boroughs of Camberwell and Deptford each for one division; and East and West Ham, Fulham and several other London boroughs, Nottingham, the West Yorkshire Coalowners and Colonel Hammersley all raised artillery of one kind or another.[1]

[1] In Liverpool an interesting experiment was made in raising a Dockers' Battalion of dock labourers, who came under military discipline and engaged to be always ready for any pressing Government work of loading or unloading ships with Government stores.

All this time the Territorial Force, the original home defence force, nearly the whole of which had individually volunteered for service overseas, had been quietly raising recruits for itself, supplementary to the recruits raised by these different methods. Altogether by July, 1915, less than a year after the declaration of war, more than 2,000,000 men had been enlisted for the land forces of the Crown by purely voluntary methods.

This rally of more than 2,000,000 volunteers to the colours was no mean achievement for a population hitherto quite unused to the idea of general military service. No doubt the pressure of public opinion was a deciding factor in the case of some young men who came, but in the main it was the rush of genuine enthusiasm from a somewhat slow-thinking race of men, as soon as the need for service had been borne in upon them. Moreover, the nation as a whole had during these few months taken a strong part in the struggle by insisting that those who fought for England should have, if not fully adequate, at least far better conditions of service than had hitherto been the case. Popular clamour demanded and obtained the right to pay for a better scale of pensions for those who lost their limbs in the country's service and for their dependants if they fell, and the wife, children and helpless father and mother left behind, while the breadwinner was away, were more generously provided for. Again, the War Office had had time, and had well used its opportunity of perfecting the organization for recruiting. Starting under unexampled difficulties in this respect, the military authorities had welcomed the assistance of capable civilians, and done

everything to encourage the necessary belief that the nation and the army were one. The recruiting officers, who knew their work, and showed tact and adaptability, were ruthlessly retained at the job they understood, though many of them would gladly have welcomed the opportunity of going off, to lose their lives, maybe, at the normal soldier's business; and their ranks were constantly being reinforced by men gradually trained for their difficult and hitherto underrated functions. Above all, the great awakening of the nation by the recruiting campaign, the appreciation thereby enforced on all men and women of the causes of the war, the national honour involved therein, and the duty imposed on every Englishman, and the generous extinction of political rivalry and social distinctions, all formed the best preparation for the great national effort, the fruits of which took two full years to ripen. The English were far behind the Allies in their preparations, for reasons which to Americans, at any rate, will come home; perhaps they should not have been, but that is another question. At any rate, since they were unprepared for a war of this magnitude, that year of ferment and hasty, but by no means ill-advised, emergency measures was essential for a democratic nation like the English to find their true bearings, and be ready to accept further burdens, which they had hitherto never believed to be necessary.

CHAPTER III

ORGANIZATION AND CONSCRIPTION

On July 15, 1915, the Royal Assent was given to the National Registration Act, which marks the beginning of a more organized method of obtaining recruits. Conscription, indeed, was not made the law of the land for another six months, but when the Act of July, 1915, was passed, it had become obvious that the indiscriminate recruiting of the first year was for many reasons wasteful, and must be modified. Without more discrimination there was a danger that vital industries of the country necessary to maintain the credit not only of Great Britain, but also of the Allies, might perish, and that the men most useful for manufacturing the vast supplies of guns, rifles, and ammunition essential for victory might disappear into the ranks of the army, while other men not so important for either purpose might still remain out of the army at unnecessary trades. Without the previous organization which a state of conscription necessitates it would probably have been impossible at the outset to exercise the due discrimination in recruiting during the first breathless plunge into the vortex of war; but by July, 1915, the sorting out of national needs had become not only possible but imperative.

The National Registration Act was not a purely military measure: it was the first step to an organization of the whole nation for war. Under its terms not only had the actual occupation of every male and female between the ages of fifteen and sixty-five to be declared, but also their capacity for any other business which might be serviceable to the country. When this registration had been accomplished and its results sorted out, it became at last possible to obtain a definite idea of the number of men of military age available for the army as well as some estimate of the workers that could be called upon for the new war factories, and the other industries necessary to the country. The registration was carried out on August 15, 1915, by the ordinary local authorities of Great Britain, assisted by over 150,000 voluntary workers to collect the cards, to check them and to tabulate the results; the final statistics were prepared in the office of the Registrar-General of Births, Deaths, and Marriages; thus without the creation of any new machinery, and with the use of organization intended for quite different purposes, and reinforced by an army of volunteers, an entirely novel undertaking in English life was carried through rapidly and without a hitch. Every male and female in Great Britain between the ages of fifteen and sixty-five was thereby registered on a separate card giving all the information necessary for recruiting and industrial purposes.

While the registration was being conducted and tabulated, various committees were appointed to consider the comparative needs of the army, munition works, and agriculture, and other civil industries. This was done in order to avoid for the future mis-

takes made in the early days of the war, when recruits were accepted who proved to be indispensable for munition and other necessary works, and had afterwards to be fetched back from the front to the factory. When the conclusions of these committees and the results of the registration had been compared, tentative allocations of the men and women available in the country could be made. Lists of trades were drawn up in various categories according to their national importance, and in certain cases it was decided that no workers, even those of military age, could be spared from them. These trades were entitled "reserved occupations," and the registration cards of men employed in them were "starred" as a precaution against their being taken away for other purposes.

For about a month while registration was in progress there had been a comparative lull in recruiting, and the time had been well spent in reorganizing the recruiting offices and preparing the staff for their new duties. When the register was ready, and the work of these committees finished, the local authorities were instructed to extract the cards of all men between the ages of eighteen and forty-one and hand them over to the recruiting staffs of their districts. Then took place the last great recruiting rally for the voluntary system. The Parliamentary Recruiting Committee, by means of its network of organization throughout the country, undertook the work of canvassing all the men of military age except those whose cards were "starred"; this could now be done systematically, since all such men in the district were known by their National Registration cards. The advertisements

calling on the fit to volunteer their services were renewed on every hoarding in the kingdom. Great recruiting marches composed of troops of all arms, with the regimental bands, paraded the country to familiarize people with the sight of their defenders, and were a great incentive to recruiting. One recruiting march by a force of 8,000 men through the Colne Valley, a district teeming with industry, where bodies of soldiers had hardly ever been seen before, was noted as peculiarly successful. By a succession of Zeppelin raids to illustrate their doctrines of frightfulness the Germans played up to the spirit of the Government in demanding recruits to punish them. The King himself, in a noble appeal recalling by its language the very spirit of Chatham, our great organizer of victory, expressed his "pride in the voluntary response from my Subjects all over the world who have sacrificed home, fortune, and life itself, in order that another may not inherit the free Empire which their ancestors and mine have built," reminded his people that "in ancient days the darkest moment has ever produced in men of our race the sternest resolve," and appealed to his people "to make good these sacrifices. More men and yet more men are wanted to keep my Armies in the Field and through them . . . in the struggle between my people and a highly organized enemy who has transgressed the Laws of Nations and changed the ordinance that binds civilized Europe together . . . to secure Victory and enduring Peace."

This time there was to be no hitch from inadequate arrangements for dealing with the numbers of recruits coming in. At the head of the Recruiting organization, Lord Derby, who had proved his personal success

as a recruiter in Lancashire, was appointed Director-General. His great innovation was the system of group-recruiting. Those desirous of enlisting immediately in some special corps of the army were still allowed to do so; but by this time the bulk of men available were less keen on fighting for its own sake than on doing their duty to their country, if they were called upon. Under the group system these men were allowed to attest to show their willingness to fight if necessary; they were then at once placed in the reserve under one of forty-six groups according to their age and married or single state; and each man knew that, until his particular group was called up, he would be undisturbed in his civil employment. The first twenty-three groups included all single men between the ages of eighteen and forty-one, a group for each year; groups twenty-four to forty-six were similarly allocated to married men. By this arrangement the War Office could always reckon on being able to call up a given number of recruits methodically.

Lord Derby in instituting this system made it plain that if the recruits provided by it were insufficient for military needs, some form of compulsory service would have to be considered, and a time-limit was fixed when the groups would be closed. It was felt, too, by many married men who proposed to attest that before calling on them the State ought to be satisfied that the great majority of single men of military age, whose family responsibilities were not so great, had enlisted or attested. To meet this point, with which he fully sympathized, Lord Derby declared that no married groups would be called up before the single men's groups had been exhausted, and further

he obtained from Mr. Asquith an assurance that unless the preponderating number of suitable single men had come in, compulsion for them would be introduced before the married volunteers were called to the colours.

On December 11, after two months of the new system, recruiting for the groups was formally closed. It had certainly been a success hitherto. In this brief space of time 2,250,000 men attested for service, and in addition, owing to the contagious enthusiasm aroused by this last recruiting rally, over 275,000 men enlisted directly in the Army. No doubt the prospect of compulsion induced many hitherto doubtful to attest. Many good patriots had said: "If they want me, let them come and fetch me," recalling the experience of every candidate at an election, who knows that many staunch supporters expect a personal canvass as a right; but, though Englishmen like to have it made quite clear that they are needed, they do not as a rule wish to be dragged to the colours or the poll, and the mere chance of compulsion caused a large number to enlist voluntarily. During the last week that the groups were open, the rush to the recruiting stations recalled and even surpassed the rushes in the early days of the war. At Great Scotland Yard, for example, where there were three separate rooms all working simultaneously, in one of them alone 6,266 recruits were disposed of in the last six days and 2,292 in one day alone.

At times like these there are bound to be in every community a certain number of shirkers, a certain number of men who honestly believe, until they are forced to serve, that they can help the country best by

attending to their families or their business, and also a certain small number of men who conscientiously object to all warfare. By the end of the year 1915 the question of how these men were to be dealt with urgently required solution. As Lincoln had written in somewhat similar circumstances: "We must somehow obtain more or relinquish the original object of the contest, together with all the blood and treasure already expended in the effort to secure it." "Shall we," he continued, "shrink from the necessary means to secure our free government? . . . Are we degenerate? Has the manhood of our race run out?" Faced with this question, the British Government gave the same answer as Lincoln, but couched in even more drastic form. After the closing of the groups it was found that there was still an appreciably large number of single men of military age who had neither attested nor enlisted. In order to fulfil the pledges given by Lord Derby and Mr. Asquith, a Military Service Bill imposing compulsory service on all such men was introduced in January, 1916, and rapidly passed through all its stages. The method of dividing the men liable to service according to ages, initiated by the group system, was continued; though in the case of compulsorily attested men, the categories were termed classes in conformity with the French system. After its passage and before it became operative the groups were once more re-opened, and as a matter of fact, a comparatively small number of single men were left to be brought into the classes by compulsion. The principle of compulsion once established, it was impossible to resist the logical consequence of compelling married men of military age also to come in

if they were needed. By May 25, 1916, all men of military age of Great Britain were liable to be called up for service.

With the principle of universal military service various safeguards against an undue disturbance of important national interests had necessarily to be introduced. The germ of these safeguards appears with the start of the voluntary groups in October, 1915. Men placed owing to their age in an early group sometimes sought postponement to a later group for family or business reasons; sometimes their employers represented that their services were essential to an industry of national importance. To judge of the validity of these claims Tribunals were established in every local recruiting area. The Tribunals were nominated by the local authorities and contained men well acquainted with the industry and other circumstances of the district. A military representative watched the interests of the Army on the Tribunal and was assisted by an Advisory Committee composed principally of the old local Parliamentary Committee of the area, who by this time knew all the ins and outs of recruiting. Under the Military Service Act these Tribunals were legally sanctioned and naturally found their functions considerably extended, since they had to decide on cases of men who so far from attesting voluntarily were sometimes brought unwillingly into the classes. At the same time Appeal Tribunals were established to review cases, on which the man called up for service or the military representative might appeal; and, when the Appeal Tribunals gave leave, the case might be finally reviewed by a Central Appeal Tribunal sitting in London.

There are in Great Britain about 2000 Local Tribunals and 70 Appeal Tribunals, besides the Central Tribunal. For many months these Tribunals, all composed of busy men, were sitting almost daily to hear the enormous mass of cases brought before them. All their work, as well as that of the Advisory Committees, has been entirely voluntary throughout. The most frequent and the most important cases to be considered were those involving questions of "reserved trades." The list of these trades was constantly under revision and the necessity for a particular man's employment in one of them was often a matter of great difficulty to decide. Other cases to be considered were those of personal hardship, when a man claimed to be the sole support of his family or would entirely sacrifice a business due solely to his own enterprise, and those of conscientious objectors, whom Parliament expressly safeguarded. The cases of conscientious objectors, though only amounting to two per cent. of the total claims for exemption, attracted a disproportionate amount of attention, and it proved particularly difficult sometimes to decide how far a man's objection was genuine, how far the result of that form of conscience "that doth make cowards of us all." However, in spite of difficulties and some doubtful decisions these Tribunals earned general confidence, as may be gathered from the fact that the number of cases appealed against was only four per cent. of the total decided.

The history of recruiting since the middle of 1916 has naturally been less interesting than in the voluntary period. The men are bound to come and are taken as they are required. On the other hand, the

problems to be dealt with by the recruiting branch have been at least as difficult. With the constantly growing needs of the army, the naval services, munitions, agriculture and other necessary industries, and the constantly decreasing supply of new men, the careful adjustment of various claims for man-power and a greater exactness in deciding on each man's particular capacity became of the greatest importance. A new Director of Recruiting was appointed, and his office was no longer confined to a few rooms in the War Office: he required an entire building for his expert staff. This staff was reinforced with barristers, specialists from other Government offices and other qualified officers fitted to deal with the delicate and complicated problems that arose. The adjustment of claims between different services and industries was a matter for the cabinet as a whole, but the apportionment of recruits for the army among the different branches was left to the Director of Recruiting. A classification into one of three categories was adopted for each recruit according to his fitness: A. for general service, B. for garrison duty abroad, or C. for duty at home, and each of these categories had further subdivisions. The control over each man registered as being within the military age was considerably tightened, and after a year of the new system it could justly be claimed that there were hardly any leakages. In the course of this work it was discovered that in the hasty recruiting of former years many men had received exemption after too perfunctory a medical examination, and in April, 1917, a new Military Service (Review of Exceptions) Act was passed to allow of such men's cases being

reviewed. Finally, it was decided in August, 1917, that the more logical and convenient method of providing recruits for the army would be for one impartial civil department to undertake the work. This department would be able to consider the needs of all services, and allocate to the army, as well as to the others, the men to which each was entitled. Consequently, recruiting for the army as for all other services and industries has now been handed over to the Director of National Services, who holds the rank of Minister of the Crown.

In a comparison between the conscription of the North during the Civil War and England's of to-day, it must be remembered, in the first place, that it was not a new experience for the United States, which had adopted some form of compulsory service both at the Revolution and in 1812, and also that Lincoln's conscription, with its provision for substitutes and the limited quotas demanded from counties, was a comparatively lax affair. In Great Britain, except in the national interests of industry and the very few cases of conscientious objectors, no able-bodied man has escaped military service. As for the revolutionary nature of this passage to compulsory service it is only necessary to read British history for the last three centuries. England has always been marked among all other nations for her suspicion, not only of compulsory military service, but of a large standing army of any kind. It may have been an unreasoning prejudice, due to vague recollection of quite different political circumstances, but perhaps for that very reason this prejudice was more firmly ingrained in the national character. All the more remarkable,

therefore, is the ease and general acquiescence with which this revolution was brought about within eighteen months of the declaration of war. Looking back on the events of this critical period one cannot help seeing that the success of this revolution was chiefly due to the wisdom of those who allowed it to develop gradually and almost imperceptibly from existing institutions. It is stated that Lord Kitchener was pressed at the beginning of the war to introduce compulsory service at once, and that he emphatically refused; and there is no doubt that he was right. The nation did not at first realize, as he did, the magnitude of the task on which they were engaged, and would not have understood the necessity of at once abandoning cherished habits and prejudices. He preferred to educate them by gradually increasing demands for volunteers, according to the system they knew, until the very numbers who had volunteered made it seem unreasonable that all should not be called upon. It will be an abiding monument to Kitchener's name, as well as a source of pride to the nation, that before a man had been brought compulsorily into the army over 5,000,000 men from these islands alone had freely offered their services to fight for the country.

In the words of an American poet:

> "What does it matter where his body fall,
> What does it matter where they build the tomb,
> Five million men, from Calais to Khartoum,
> These are his wreath and his memorial.'

PART II

TRAINING PROBLEMS

CHAPTER IV

THE SPIRIT OF ARMY TRAINING

The army that went out to Mons in the early days of August, 1914, was probably the best-trained army that has ever left England. Cromwell's Ironsides and Wellington's Peninsular Veterans are, of course, out of comparison, for their fine spirit had been tempered by the experience of war. But as far as peace training can go, the regimental officers and men of the Expeditionary Force could hardly have been improved. For the first time, too, in our history we had at the beginning of the war a staff well trained in staff duties. This high state of efficiency in our field army was almost entirely due to the great improvements in organization and training made since the South African War. That long-drawn-out war, in which what were then believed to be all the resources of the Empire were pitted against a foe numerically very inferior, had awakened the army and to some extent the nation to the shortcomings of the old army system. The twelve years' interval had been well spent in organizing an army on some settled principle, in creating a general staff and in improving the training of both officers and men. The number of officers who took a keen interest in their profession, who talked about it and studied its problems, instead of being in a minority, as was at times the case in the

last century, was almost equal to their total number; and the opportunities given them to pursue military studies at the Staff Colleges at Camberley and Quetta, the Cavalry School, the School of Musketry, the Schools of Gunnery at Shoeburyness and Lydd, the Ordnance College or the School of Military Engineering, had been greatly enlarged and developed. The training of part of the Expeditionary Force at Aldershot, under the commanders who themselves led it into action, was training such as never had been seen in England. The endurance and marching power, the skill at arms, the intelligence, and, above all, the morale of the soldiers of this fine body of men, had been brought to the pitch which enabled them to add another laurel to England's military record in the great retreat from Mons.

The high standard then set by the Expeditionary Force was always before those training the new armies as an ideal. Naturally, it was in some respects an unattainable ideal. The Expeditionary Force had the country's best soldiers to train them: nearly all these had gone abroad, and so were not available for training the new recruits. Again, while the old army's training was a matter of years, the new armies had to get what training they could in hardly more months. There were also other great difficulties, as will appear in the following pages. But that the difficulties were in the main overcome is evident from the account which the new armies have given of themselves before the enemy.

In any account of the new armies' training, it is necessary to distinguish broadly between the earlier and later stage of the system of training adopted for

recruits. The earlier stage corresponds roughly with the first seventeen months of the war, from August, 1914, to the end of 1915; the later stage from the beginning of 1916 onwards. In the first period, before the Military Service Acts had come into force, the system of training, as we have seen was the case with recruiting, had perforce to be conducted very much on a hand-to-mouth policy. In the first place, until Lord Derby's group system was introduced in October, 1915, the numbers of recruits on any day could never be estimated beforehand, and those who came in had to be trained at once, so that the distribution of men into categories according to their stage of training was often impossible. Secondly, the need of men for strengthening the lines in the many fronts we were occupying was so imperative that a very prolonged training was out of the question. Further, in those first seventeen months of the war the scarcity of equipment and of thoroughly efficient instructors was more marked than in the succeeding period. In a word, owing to the stress of circumstances during this first period, the training of the new armies was necessarily not so well organized and systematized as it has become in the second period. Since the beginning of 1916 the numbers of recruits to be trained at any given period can be calculated with fair accuracy; there has not been the same urgent need to send out fresh divisions as complete units, and it has become much more a question of carefully training drafts or units for home defence, or even re-training officers and men whose previous training was inadequate; equipment and skilled instructors, if still not always adequate, have been forthcoming to a much greater

extent; and, lastly, there has been time to look round, profit by the mistakes of the past, and consider more scientific methods of training large armies. But while it is important to bear in mind the distinction between these two periods, it must be remembered that it is only a rough distinction. Many of the improvements and more scientific methods of training were evolved in the earlier period, and in the later some of the defects from want of adequate resources still remained. In fact, the training system of the new armies has been gradually improving all the time and is still developing; so that at no moment can one say that the system is complete. *E pur si muove.*

One characteristic, however, is common to both periods: the spirit which animates the teaching of military duties. The British Army has in the past been a very small army compared with that of any other Continental nation, but in military experience of small operations it has far surpassed all others. The small wars and the semi-military, semi-civil duties which have fallen to the lot of our soldiers in almost every quarter of the globe have not perhaps been the best training for war on the vast Continental scale, but at least they have taught the officers and men the qualities of resource, independence and self-reliance, which go to make the best soldier in the long run. This practical training helps the British soldier to his inestimable quality of never knowing that he is beaten, common also, it may be remarked, to the French—a quality of which the late German Chancellor complained when all the cards seemed to be in the Central Powers' hands, and which accounts for that Russian saying that the English never win more

than one battle in a war—but that is the last. Another peculiarity of the British Army is its strong regimental feeling. In the armies of other nations there is generally to be found a great *esprit de corps* in such picked regiments as the Prussian Guard, the French Chasseurs or the Italian Bersaglieri; but as a rule the loyalty of the Continental soldier is primarily to his army rather than to his regiment. Both forms of loyalty have their advantages and disadvantages; and there have been distinguished soldiers in the British Army who have wished to break down some of this regimental feeling for a more direct army feeling. But whether for good or evil, this regimental feeling exists and is not likely to be broken down, even with the hugely increased army and the hugely increased regiments that we now have; nor must it be imagined that regimental loyalty excludes army loyalty; it stands first, indeed, but in itself leads to army loyalty just as a man's love for his own particular countryside helps him in his devotion to

> "This blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this England,
> . . . . . .
> This land of such dear souls, this dear, dear land."

One great advantage of this regimental feeling is that it tends to make of officers and men one happy family proud of themselves, proud of their regimental home, wherever it may be—in tents or huts or bivouacs or in the trenches—keen to make themselves and that temporary home smart, as a sign of the alert spirit within, and jointly anxious to make that regiment a glory to the British Army. Lastly, the British Army, in spite even of recent Military Service Acts, is in

character fundamentally a volunteer army. By long tradition, the men who join it are treated as men who have joined it of their free choice, men to whom the army has to be made attractive by their being treated with courtesy and consideration by those in command of them and as sensible beings, who work all the better for understanding fully what is required of them; and this tradition has not been impaired by conscription.

The spirit of the training given to the British Army is a result of these characteristics. It is a spirit of self-reliance, loyalty and kindness, all based on a strong sense of discipline and community of interest. The essence of this spirit is to be found in our Field Service Regulations, but has perhaps been best summarized by that great soldier, Lord Wolseley, in his *Soldiers' Pocket Book*, in such injunctions to officers as—

"Make a man proud of himself and of his corps and he can always be depended upon.

"An officer should sympathize with their [the men's] likes and dislikes, their pleasures and annoyances . . . until at last they regard him as one of themselves, a companion and a friend. For and with such a man they will brave any danger or endure any amount of privation.

"No man who knew soldiers or their peculiar ways of thinking . . . would ever deprive a soldier of any peculiarity that he prided himself on without having some overpowering reasons for doing so.

"The soldier is a peculiar being that can alone be brought to the highest efficiency by inducing him to believe that he belongs to a regiment that is infinitely superior to the others round him."

Such and similar sentiments are those which made

the first six divisions [1] what they were and have animated the training of the new armies throughout from the early days of rough and ready methods down to the present more scientific system. It is a broad-minded and tolerant training, which insists on smartness, on duty and discipline and high courage and courtesy, but not on hate. In the early days it was taught by voice and precept to the young officers and their men by the few men of the old army left to train them: now it has become a code of morality, one may almost call it, taught systematically in the training establishments for officers and N.C.Os. at home and in France, and thence permeating the whole army. In some of these schools the code is an unwritten one; sometimes it is set out in the form of notes on morale, discipline, leadership. A set of such notes, prepared for one of the army schools in France, in their practical common-sense combined with high ideals of conduct, all set out in rather homely language, might well be given as a standard of conduct to every boy and girl in England; for it is a compendium of civic no less than military virtue. Take, for example, this extract from a passage on patriotism—

"What is patriotism? It is the spirit of the nation, it is one of the grandest forces on earth. Think of 90,000 Boers fighting the whole British Empire, a quarter of the globe, for two and a half years. Here is fine patriotism, a true fighting spirit."

Or this on the more homely subject of comfort in billets—

[1] The same remark is true of the 7th and 8th Divisions, composed of the old army soldiers, though they did not go abroad with the old Expeditionary Force.

"Officers should inspect their men's billets before their own. Even if nothing can be done, always visit them. The mere fact of showing yourselves will prove to them that their comfort is your first consideration."

Or, lastly, what could be better common-sense and finer teaching than this—

"When a man joins your company, you must make him feel 'at home'; then you must tell him of the company he has joined, but it is no good telling him that it is the best in the regiment if it is the worst, or that his regiment is unequalled if the men are slack and slovenly, for he will soon detect the fraud and simply consider you a fool. See that it is the best, that it is unequalled, and then impress on him that he belongs to the finest army in the world and the finest regiment in the army."

The men who came into the army as recruits were of the kind who are ready to respond to such training. No one who watched the long columns of recruits in the early days of the war marching off to their depôts would have failed to perceive this. Clad in all manner of civilian clothes, in caps, in straw hats, or bare-headed, they looked motley enough crowds; but the individuals composing them had that straight, brave look in the eyes as they marched on with head erect to the fate in store for them, which promised well for their acceptance of the British Army's glorious traditions. In the later stages of the Derby recruits and the conscripts that look of absolute certainty was perhaps not so universally apparent at first, but a day or two with the army soon brought it in the faces of those who lacked it at the outset.

CHAPTER V

TRAINING THE NEW ARMIES UNDER DIFFICULTIES, 1914–15

§ 1.—*Summary of the Difficulties to be Overcome.*

Before the hosts of raw recruits were converted into the armies which have given a good account of themselves in France, the Dardanelles, Egypt and Mesopotamia they had to be housed, fed, clothed, armed, equipped, distributed into units and taught drill, discipline and the technical skill needed of modern soldiers; in a word, animated with *esprit de corps* and the true military spirit. The last-named requisite, which may be called the moral element, is the most important of all, but depends to a large extent on the adequate fulfilment of the other needs. You cannot, for example, obtain good work out of a soldier unless he is properly housed and fed; the uniform helps to turn a mob into a corporate body, and encourages a feeling of pride in the military profession. Again, without proper arms and equipment drill very soon loses its power of sustaining interest and makes it impossible to attain the technical skill needed.

Lastly, without leaders, expert themselves, it is difficult to obtain a high standard either of skill or enthusiasm from those whom they are to lead.

§ 2.—*Quartering.*

At first proper accommodation was a great difficulty. At the outbreak of war there was accommodation in barracks in the British Isles for some 175,000 troops. In the first month of the war the number of recruits alone exceeded this total, without reckoning the reservists pouring in, sometimes at the rate of 45,000 a week, and the Territorials, who completed their numbers in four days and continued to grow *pari passu* with the regular forces. Canada, too, early in the war sent large expeditionary forces for training in England, and later troops came here for training from the other Dominions.

Arrangements were promptly made to clear all married quarters in barracks, the women being sent to their homes, and by this means and by utilizing accessory buildings the barrack accommodation was increased so as to provide for 262,000. Many, too, were put into tents; others into schools and other public institutions or specially hired buildings; others, again, into billets in private houses. In the early days of the war troops to the number of some 800,000 were housed in hired buildings and billets; and, as such conditions had never previously been contemplated, new rules and regulations had to be compiled, quartering committees to be established, and a system for assessing rents, values and damages had to be devised. Though there is little objection to the housing of troops in training in capacious hired buildings, ordinary billets with or without subsistence were open to many objections, such as the difficulty of assembling men from billets scattered over wide areas

and then, perhaps, having to convey them long distances to the training centres. It indicates, therefore, the straits to which the Army was put to accommodate its recruits in the early days that in those early days resort was had so extensively to the billet system.

Even such makeshift methods took considerable time to organize, while the strong tide of recruiting continued to flow in. A good deal of discomfort was inseparable from these conditions, which were aggravated when bad weather followed the fine months of the opening of the campaign.

Troops were then withdrawn wherever possible from the tented camps, and in some cases were put into huts not yet completed, through which rain percolated to some extent, no other accommodation being available. These cases were, however, rare. Some overcrowding also took place, and this and the depressing conditions of rain and deep mud were responsible for some sickness. Happily, the first three months of the war, when the difficulties were at their greatest, had been exceptionally fine. Moreover, the enthusiasm and courage of the new soldiers carried them triumphantly through much hardship.

The only satisfactory method of housing the large numbers that had to be dealt with was in hutments built in camps near the training grounds; and the building of these huts was decided on in the first week of the war, the first plans being ready by August 14, 1914. At first it was proposed to build huts for half a million men, but later the programme was increased to hutments for nearly a million, besides large remount establishments, store sheds, aeroplane sheds, hospital

huts and rifle ranges. For this vast programme there were difficulties enough in obtaining timber and other requisites, labour and an adequate inspection staff, but these were not all. To all the camps water and gas or electric light, drainage and telephones had to be laid, and sometimes in remote districts entirely new plant had to be set up for these purposes. Old roads had to be repaired and new ones laid out for carrying the heavy material needed for these building operations, and all the larger camps were fed by specially laid lines of railway. Within a year huts to hold three-quarters of a million men, with water and light laid on, had been built, besides various enormous depôts for stores, remounts, etc. These huts seemed to spring up in every part of the country; one great bare moorland in the Midlands, uninhabited since the dawn of history, has now been covered with new roads, railways, pumping establishments, power stations and huts for some 40,000 individuals.

Much relief also was given to the War Office by the condition laid down for the numerous "Pals' Battalions" that they should be temporarily housed by those responsible for raising them. By this means a large number of recruits were housed in their own homes, or in town halls and other local buildings, while in several cases large camps were built by private enterprise and were afterwards taken over by the Government.

The difficulty of housing the new armies was not entirely overcome for a long time; and many units had still, as late as 1916, to be accommodated by the least satisfactory method of billets. But within a year of the declaration of war the problem of quarter-

ing the troops in the chief training centres had been solved. How important that was for proper training may be seen by the stress laid on this matter by the inspectors of training, who in their early reports had constantly to complain of the bad accommodation for troops as a cause of bad discipline and slovenly training, and who testified to a corresponding improvement in the men as soon as they could be decently accommodated.

§ 3.—*Feeding.*

The only branch of army supply which appears never to have suffered from a lack of material is that of food. At the beginning there were, of course, defects of organization in the distribution of food, but these were at worst short-lived, and after the first few weeks the chief complaint about the food seems to have been that it was excessive, some of it being wasted, and that, owing to a temporary shortage of appliances and cooks trained to military methods, the cooking of it was in some instances bad.

The adequacy of the food supply illustrates the value of forethought in organization, for, though armies of the size we raised had never been contemplated, a system for feeding troops on a war basis had been elaborated two years before the war; and that system proved fully satisfactory. The chief method of supply employed was by the depôt system. There are certain base depôts which feed other advanced depôts, from which, in turn, all large formations of troops are fed. Some of the base depôts feed as many as 250,000 men—even more. The issues from some of the advanced depôts are on almost as vast a scale.

One of them, for example, sends out full rations for 100,000 troops and part rations for 40,000 more, 340 issues of rations to so many separate units being made daily from this one storehouse. Among the rations sent out from this advanced depôt is bread, which is all baked in one central bakery. At one period, when there were 150,000 troops to be fed in this area, the daily output from this bakery amounted to 75,000 loaves.

This system of issue has been the main method of feeding the army since the beginning of the war. It is economical, because all the contracts are placed directly by one central authority at the War Office and no middleman's profits are involved; it is conducted on so huge a scale that there is always food available for each unit as it comes within the area of any given advance depôt; and it has this additional advantage that it is the same system as that carried out on active service, so that the A.S.C. supply officers are trained from the first for their duties at the front.

At the outset this system could not be carried out as completely as it can now. When units were springing up all over the country, and had to be housed wherever there happened to be room, while they were waiting for their proper camps, much of the feeding had to be done by local arrangements. For two months the County Associations provided the food for the Territorials, and the numerous units raised by municipalities and private individuals were for several months fed by their "raisers" on allowances fixed by the War Office. In certain cases local contracts were authorized for Service battalions. But in

a surprisingly short time the system sketched above became general.

Unfortunately, at the start waste was unavoidable. In the first place, the allowance of certain articles of food, especially meat, was found to be excessive. This matter, however, was very soon taken in hand by the Quartermaster-General's Department. The meat ration was reduced, and instructional handbooks for the systematic handling of the soldier's ration were issued to all units of the new armies, which had the effect of improving the soldier's dietary as well as reducing its cost. There was still much to contend with, however; the chief requisites were more appliances for the military cookhouses and the training in military methods of the new army cooks. Unfortunately, in the past there had sometimes been a tendency to regard army cooks as persons of little consequence, and in some regiments men who were indifferent soldiers in other respects were detailed to cook their comrades' rations. This tendency was noted in certain units of the new armies. It is, perhaps, natural when every man capable of taking his place in the fighting line is required there; but such a policy is nevertheless very unfortunate, and, indeed, short-sighted, for on the efforts of the regimental cook depends in a large measure the fighting efficiency of the whole unit. Moreover, the duties of a regimental cook are exceedingly arduous, and the man who is indifferent in other duties is hardly likely under any circumstances to prove useful in the regimental cookhouse. Where this policy of detailing the indifferent soldiers for cooking duties was followed, the excellent food provided by the Government was invariably

served in a slovenly, unappetizing way, and much of it wasted in consequence. To make matters worse, the Army School of Cookery, which had been gradually raising the standard of cooking in the old army, was disbanded on the outbreak of war, when it was more needed than ever.

It was not long, however, before the wastefulness of this system, both in the health and well-being of the men and in the misuse of food, was realized; and strenuous efforts were made to improve matters. Schools of instruction in cookery were re-established in all home commands, and commanding officers were encouraged to lay stress on variety in the cooking of food, on cleanliness and on economy. Moreover, a special branch of the Quartermaster-General's Department was established to supervise arrangements for the soldier's messing and for the prevention of waste. These measures gradually bore fruit, with the result that there have been great improvements in the variety and wholesomeness of the meals given to soldiers, while the cost of feeding them has greatly diminished.

§ 4.—*Clothing, Boots, etc.*

Very soon after the war started it was seen that millions of suits of uniform, pairs of boots, articles of underclothing and other necessaries for the soldier would be required, and that the stock previously authorized, as in the case of almost everything else, was calculated for an army reckoned in tens instead of hundreds of thousands. To meet the vastly increased demand very few manufacturers had the

requisite knowledge or plant for making the numerous articles of military clothing and equipment according to regulation patterns; to supply them the manufacturing resources of the country had to be largely modified and reorganized. At first the War Office left the clothing and equipment of the Territorial Force and the locally raised units entirely to the County Associations and the local bodies who raised the latter, confining itself to the needs of the expeditionary force and the new Service battalions. This led to some competition for the same supplies between the War Office and these local bodies, but generally speaking the distribution of duties was an advantage in opening out further sources of supply.

Nevertheless, for the first few months of the war the difficulties of clothing the recruits were very great. The available stocks in the country were soon exhausted; and machinery and the supply of dyes, cloth, leather, etc. for the manufacture of new stocks could not be improvised in a week or two, while the dozen manufacturers of khaki cloth before the war were being expanded to some two hundred. In this dilemma the best expedients possible had to be devised. Civilian overcoats were bought up and served to soldiers; recruits who could produce good suits of their own clothes were told to wear them, and received an allowance to cover the wear and tear. A co-operative society was discovered able to provide 400,000 emergency blue suits at short notice, and these were quickly secured; and large orders for suits and underclothing were placed in America. Army boots —that all-important part of a soldier's equipment— were for a long time sadly deficient: as makeshifts,

civilian boots, which had not the lasting power of the army pattern, were served out. For though, as in the case of uniforms, the number of firms making army boots was very soon enlarged—from twenty-five to three hundred and fifty—the erection of new plant and instruction in the methods of manufacture was a slow and laborious process. The early enthusiasm of many recruits was considerably damped by being obliged to march and drill in public, attired in all sorts of garments, some in khaki, some in blue, some in civilian clothes of varying hues and cut. Constant complaints were heard from commanding officers and inspectors of training as to the difficulty of instilling smartness into the men while this tatterdemalion stage lasted. With clothes and boots, as with everything else, the men at the front had first to be cared for, and though these never suffered, the men at home had often to wait a long time for their needs to be supplied.

With time, however, the War Office was able to surmount the difficulty of providing sufficient uniforms, boots and other equipment, and by the end of the year 1915 not only was the whole army as well shod and clothed as any had been before, but we were able very materially to help our Allies with clothing and boots. Nevertheless, the long months of insufficient clothing and comparatively bad boots were a grave, though unavoidable, handicap in the early stages of training. That it was not a more serious handicap is a great tribute to the men's spirit.

§ 5.—*Arming and Equipment.*

The most serious material deficiency for the training of the new armies was the lack of guns, rifles and all other ordnance stores.

(*a*) *Rifles.*—When the war started the country possessed less than 800,000 rifles, of which little more than half were of the new short pattern, and many of these were in process of being re-sighted for the improved mark of ammunition. When the original force, mobilized on August 4, 1914, had been armed, there remained the authorized reserve of 150,000 rifles. That reserve would have met the wastage in rifles of the Expeditionary Force alone, but was soon exhausted when drawn upon for the additional troops raised. Naturally, when the need of the men at the front was so great, the recruits in training had to wait their turn until the new supplies could be turned out in sufficient quantities. When the war started the weekly output of rifles in the United Kingdom was under 2000, and though with night shifts and full use of plant this number was considerably increased, the amount turned out was infinitesimal compared with the needs of the new armies. Unfortunately the rifle, though needed in larger quantities than any other weapon for an army, requires longer time than any other before its manufacture with new plant can be started, owing largely to the number of gauges of extreme accuracy required in the process; consequently the recruits had to wait long.

How serious this state of things was may be seen from the records of training in the new armies. The

first and second armies, containing the earliest recruits, did comparatively well, since by January, 1915, the first new army had about 400 Service rifles per battalion, and the second about 100; and by March they were beginning to be fully armed. But the third and later-formed armies were much worse off. Of course, a certain amount of rifle drill and musketry could be accomplished by changing round the few Service rifles in each battalion, much as the three Fates handed round their solitary eye in the story of Perseus, and by using as makeshifts Service rifles, the barrels of many of which were too worn to shoot with sufficient accuracy to allow musketry to be carried out with them. The troops were also provided with a proportion of rifles not quite of the Service pattern and technically known as D.P. (drill-purpose). But it was a highly unsatisfactory method of training, especially as each man in a battalion ought to be taught to take a personal pride in his own rifle and to know its idiosyncrasies. As was reported of one of the divisions of the third new army: "The men joined the Service under the impression that after a few months they would get their chance at the front, but they have now been hard at work training day after day for seven months, mainly with an insufficient number of D.P. rifles; and this to a keen man must be depressing, as he never feels he is getting near his goal." However, depressing or not at the time, this lack of rifles does not in the long run appear to have seriously affected the spirit or capacity of the men of the new armies, to judge from their achievements. Happily, there was no lack of ranges for firing musketry courses, since the large number of

new ranges that had to be set up were so expeditiously finished that they were always ready at least as soon as the men required them.[1] But undoubtedly the scarcity of rifles in the early days prolonged the necessary period of training. Fortunately the difficulty was finally overcome, and an adequate supply of rifles has now for some time been available, not only for ourselves but also for some of our Allies.

(*b*) *Artillery.*—The story of the supply of guns for training is very much the same as that of rifles. The position briefly was that at the outbreak of war we had enough guns for eight divisions, with the authorized reserve for wastage, and that our normal requirements were so small that we had no means of immediately accelerating the supply, since the plant laid down in the Government factory and the few outside ordnance firms was only calculated for the normal supply. The War Office took immediate steps to increase the production by every possible means; laying down extra plant in their own factory and encouraging private firms to do the same. But even so, the supply of guns was for a long time barely sufficient to satisfy the ever-growing demands for artillery of every calibre at the various fronts. The consequence was that all the guns, as they were turned out, had to be sent across to France, Egypt, Gallipoli; and as the needs of the artillery at the front progressively increased owing to the nature of the trench warfare, so the prospects of artillery in training in the United Kingdom seemed ever to recede. In October, 1914, the artillery of one division of the first new army had only six 18-prs. altogether instead of its full

[1] See below, Chap. XII, p. 167.

complement of fifty-four; another had only a few of the obsolete 15-prs.; in March, 1915, some divisions had only two guns per battery; even in May, when the full complement of guns had arrived for the first new army divisions, the equipment of dial sights, etc., for indirect laying was still deficient. The second new army was at that date in very much the same state; in their case, however, no howitzers at all had been delivered. The third and fourth new armies were still worse off.

In respect of arms the artillery were thus even more scantily provided than the infantry. Some idea of the look and mechanism of a rifle could be obtained by the infantrymen from the earliest days of training; but for months the gunner in some divisions had to try and learn his far more complicated duties without even seeing, still less working or firing, the gun to which he was being trained. Some attempt was made to remedy the defect by various substitutes for the service gun. Dummy wooden guns were made or purchased by enthusiastic officers with which to teach their men the positions and motions of loading and firing; obsolete 15-prs., 12-prs. and antiquated French 90-mm. were utilized for the same purpose; but even when some such guns as these were available, there were no artillery instruments such as dial sights, range finders, directors and so on, without which a modern battery is almost helpless, except such as could be improvised by an ingenious limber-gunner. Similarly horses, harness, and the proper wagons were hardly ever complete for any battery of the first three armies till on the very eve of their departure overseas.

We have now happily passed those depressing days,

but it is important to remember that period of anxiety in Great Britain, due to our absolute want of preparedness for a war such as we are now waging. It is all the more necessary to remember it, since it helps to explain our inability to co-operate with our Allies in certain critical periods. We have now by unparalleled exertions developed our supply of guns and ammunition sufficiently to keep our men at the various fronts at their proper quota, to be able to train recruits at home effectively and even to supply our Allies with some of their needs. But this consummation was long delayed, and it is well, when we see training batteries at home well equipped, and infantry battalions in the camps all fully armed with rifles, to remember the unexampled difficulties of training in the first year and more of the war, and the spirit which must have animated instructors and the men under them to enable them to conquer those difficulties and learn their business as well as they did.

§ 6.—*The Supply of Officers and N.C.Os.*

The greatest obstacle which Great Britain had to surmount before being able to send out the large armies required to meet the well-trained and well-equipped German hosts arose from the depletion of cadres of officers fit to train these armies. The recruits came up fast enough, as we have seen elsewhere, and though their housing, clothing, equipping and arming were for some time a subject of anxiety, these were difficulties which could be surmounted, sometimes in weeks, at most in months. But officers and non-commissioned officers fit to train recruits

normally require a much longer period of training themselves than those whom they have to instruct. Seeing that before the war England's whole military policy was directed to the end of having a small striking force of six divisions ready for duty overseas, and that the only other forces contemplated were a comparatively small home defence force and the garrisons in India and overseas, it is hardly surprising that the greatest difficulty was found in training the millions who came to take the place of hundreds of thousands.

To make matters worse, even the men, who in peace time had been allocated to the duties of training the special reserve and territorials, were for the most part incorporated in the Expeditionary Force which sailed to Flanders in the early days of August, 1914. For example, most of the adjutants of the Territorial Force units and their regular non-commissioned establishment, often the only men in these units with any expert knowledge of military training, had to be sent abroad to take their place with their own regular units; in the Flying Corps the majority of the officers were sent abroad, hardly any experienced pilots being left to teach the new recruits; nearly all the qualified instructors in physical training, both at the central school and in the commands, were sent off to rejoin their regiments at the front; even the Army School of Cookery was closed on mobilization and the instructors sent off to cook for headquarters in France, thus leaving no one to instruct the new armies in this very essential matter for the soldier's comfort and efficiency; and the same tale might be told of every branch of the service.

The departure to the front of almost every man fitted to train recruits [1] was a necessity due to the scheme of organization laid down for the mobilizing of the Expeditionary Force. This scheme was elaborated when no such vast increase of the army, as actually took place, was contemplated: in the circumstances it proved unfortunate. Indeed, even had it been possible to keep at home all the men previously engaged in training, their number would have been sadly inadequate to the new task devolving upon them. Still, they would have formed a valuable nucleus: as it was, there was hardly even a nucleus of experts to train the new armies. How great the dearth was may be imagined from the fact that at least one officer is required for forty men, and that before the war barely 300,000 men were fully officered; and that the army was increased by that amount within little more than a month from August 4, 1914.

How was this dearth of training cadres met? Various expedients were adopted.

1. For the senior commands in the new service units—

(*a*) A nucleus of regular officers, left at the depôts when the Expeditionary Force went overseas, proved of the utmost use in commanding new service battalions. This nucleus was spread out as thinly as possible so as to have at least one experienced man in every unit.

(*b*) Some hundreds of officers of the Indian Army, home on leave, were retained for training purposes,

[1] On the eve of sailing an order came to the Expeditionary Force from the War Office that every battalion should leave behind one captain and one subaltern to assist in training the new armies. These officers, of course, helped greatly.

and in the early days of the war materially helped this nucleus of regular officers in stiffening the officers' cadres in the service battalions.

(c) Retired officers ("dug-outs," as they were popularly called) were appointed in large numbers. Men who had thought their work in life was over, others who had left the army to take up more lucrative professions, or to enjoy a life of greater independence or adventure, flocked back to their old profession of arms as soon as they saw the country might need them. In the great dearth of experienced men they were nearly all welcomed and given important duties in training the hosts of recruits. Most of them were invaluable to meet the pressing need, and many of them proved to be excellent officers in every respect, both at home and at the front. But this was not the case with all. Some were too old, or otherwise physically unfit even at home, where long hours and strenuous exertion were almost as much needed as at the front. For example, the second in command of one battalion was discovered to be fifty-five years old, had to use a chair to mount his horse, and was physically unfit to ride any distance or to reconnoitre. But this officer was nevertheless as keen as any, and did good work in training his men, though he was not up to leading them at the front. Even in such cases where the officer was fit to train but not to take his men abroad, it proved a considerable handicap to the men not to have been trained by the man who after training them and getting to know their capabilities was to command them when their real work at the front began. Others were not up to date, and had not the capacity for making themselves so.

This was a serious disability, since within the last ten years there had been drastic changes in the organization and drill of the army. The infantry drill had been altered, and the double company substituted for the old single company; in artillery the changes had been even more notable by the introduction and almost exclusive use of indirect laying, which required in artillery officers and N.C.Os. faculties of rapid observation and calculation, impossible to obtain without severe study and application; again the co-operation of artillery and aeroplanes was a closed book to all the old school of gunners; the use of telephones and signals had been developed in a manner unknown to quite recent generations of officers. Indeed, the whole art of tactics had been brought up to date and revivified in those admirable manuals of military training, the Field Service Regulations, first issued in 1909, long after many of these men had quitted the army.

(*d*) Many civilians over the age of twenty-five were given their first commissions as lieutenants or captains, especially in technical corps for which their previous pursuits had fitted them.

(*e*) After the first battles of the Expeditionary Force in Flanders, wounded officers from the front, not yet fit to rejoin their units but recovered enough for training duties, were impressed for this service. These were of special use, since, in addition to their previous training, they had experience of the actual conditions of continental warfare.

2. For the junior ranks—

(*a*) The usual avenues for permanent commissions in the army before the war were through Woolwich

and Sandhurst and the Special Reserve. For commissions in the old regular units this system was continued; but the supply of officers was greatly enlarged by increasing the establishments at Woolwich and Sandhurst; by considerably shortening the course at both places; and by raising the upper limit of age for entry from nineteen and a half to twenty-five.[1] By these measures the yearly output of officers to replace casualties in the old regular units was quadrupled. The Royal Military College at Kingston in Canada, and the training colleges, which took the place of the Staff College at Quetta and at Wellington, Madras, also supplied officers for permanent commissions, and a certain number of commissions were granted direct to university candidates. As a general rule, however, these officers were not available for the new armies, being needed chiefly to fill gaps in the commissioned ranks of the old battalions.

(*b*) A certain number of ex-warrant and non-commissioned officers were given commissions. All these men had, of course, a good grounding in methods of imparting discipline; but their suitability as officers varied considerably according to the length of time since they had left the army. On the whole these officers were exceedingly valuable, especially in the early stages of training when a good grounding in discipline and a knowledge of drill were all-important. In many cases, too, either in the first instance or after a short interval, such officers obtained the rank of lieutenant or captain, and fully justified their promotion.

(*c*) The junior commissions given to these first two

[1] See below, Ch. VII.

classes were, as a rule, regular commissions for the army. But the first class provided hardly any officers for the new armies, while the second class was comparatively small. The great and immediate need was still to get officers for the thousands of recruits coming in daily to form the new Service battalions. To obtain the supply immediately in adequate numbers, it was necessary to waive the preliminary training, either at a military school or in the ranks, required of officers taking regular commissions. It was decided therefore to give "temporary commissions" for the new battalions to young men otherwise suitable, but without the full training normally required.

At this juncture the wisdom of Lord Haldane in providing a method of rapidly expanding the commissioned ranks by means of the Officers' Training Corps became apparent. This corps is divided into two categories, senior and junior; the senior being Territorial units recruited at the universities and the Inns of Court;[1] the junior cadet units composed of boys under education at the chief public and grammar schools of the country. Both senior and junior divisions of the Officers' Training Corps were thus mainly composed of men or boys of the intellectual and moral attainments likely to fit them for the rank of officers, and in addition they had received a training, carefully designed to that end, especially in the senior division. There were at the beginning of the war, twenty-two units of the senior division, and considerably over 100 of the junior division. Naturally there were differences in the quality of training

[1] Since the War the Artists Rifle Corps has also performed the functions of an O.T.C. unit.

given in the various units, some being excellent, others poor; but, taken altogether, they could provide a very large number of young men with some training in the duties of command. For want of fully trained officers they thus afforded the best material then available for forming the new officer cadres. Some of the best trained men from the senior division were given regular commissions at once, and large numbers received "temporary commissions" for service with the new battalions. A great many senior boys from the cadet corps of the schools were also given temporary commissions. It is an indication of the value of the O.T.C. at a critical juncture of the war, that within the first year of the war the Oxford University O.T.C. unit provided over 2,500 officers for the army, the Cambridge O.T.C. provided over 2,300, three of the smaller northern universities units over 1,000, and the Inns of Court over 2,500. Thus the O.T.C., as had been intended, proved an admirable nursery for officers on a sudden expansion of the army, and has fully justified the policy which called it into existence.

(*d*) But even the O.T.C. units, fruitful as they were, had not sufficient men to supply the need of officers. Junior "temporary" commissions were accordingly also given to a large number of university undergraduates and senior boys of public schools, who, though they had not had the O.T.C. training, seemed otherwise to be capable of command. In fact, before the end of 1914 there were hardly any students left at the larger universities, since nearly all had taken commissions or enlisted; and practically all youths from public schools have, since August, 1914, applied for commissions as soon as they reached the age limit.

(*e*) Some of the best junior officers came from those young men, who had left England for the Colonies or foreign countries to take up a life of adventure. As soon as the news of the war reached them, hundreds of these flocked back to offer their services to the Mother Country, and were gladly accepted. A file exists in the War Office showing the various places outside the British Isles whence officers came to take up commissions. The list is somewhat rough, but it gives an imposing idea of the world-wide interests of Great Britain and how men flocked home from the ends of the earth to her aid. In it are to be found: Australia, Bermuda, Barbados, British Guiana, Burmah, British Honduras, Canada, Ceylon, the Channel Islands, British East Africa, the Falkland Islands, Fiji, Hong Kong, Halifax, Jamaica, the Leeward Islands, Mauritius, the Malay States, Nigeria, South Africa, the Straits Settlements, Sierra Leone, Trinidad, Buenos Ayres, Bankok, Guatemala, Lisbon, Lima, Mexico, Montevideo, Madeira, Madrid, Manchuria, Nangking, Oporto, Pekin, Rio de Janeiro, Rome, Singapore, Shanghai, Santiago, Teheran, Tokio, Washington. Other lists, even more comprehensive, could doubtless be prepared, and you could hardly now go into any regimental mess of the British Army without meeting young men able to tell you, from practical experience, of one or more distant parts of the globe. Certainly no young men made better officers than these, for all had taken some risks, they had been on their own responsibility, and had generally had men under them and experienced dangers by flood and field.

(*f*) For the locally raised or "Pals'" battalions,

considerable latitude was given to the raisers in the appointment of officers. As the ranks were filled with men belonging to the same place or engaged in the same pursuits, the officers were, as much as possible, drawn from the same source. Thus for the "Pals'" battalions of a town, the managers of commercial establishments, or, perhaps, foremen and chief clerks in the same place, or the sons of neighbouring gentry, were chosen for commissions by the raisers, and almost invariably accepted by the War Office. The quality of these officers depended, of course, largely on the powers of discrimination and complete disinterestedness of the local raisers, who exercised their choice admirably in the overwhelming majority of instances. Nevertheless, as a whole the officers of local battalions were not up to the standard of the others, because the field of choice was necessarily more limited.

(*g*) For officers of technical corps, such as the R.E., the A.S.C., the R.A.M.C., the Army Ordnance Corps, Pioneer Battalions, and to a certain extent the R.A., something more than the general education of a public school is required. On the whole the supply of officers for such corps has been surprisingly adequate, owing to the trouble taken in their selection by the War Office, and its readiness to take advice from the heads of the corresponding civil professions, as to the professional and moral capacities of the men recommended for commissions. For example, in the case of the R.E., officer candidates for field units were recommended by the President of the Institution of Civil Engineers, and by the universities; for the railway companies candidates were nominated by the principal railway companies at home and abroad;

tunnelling companies of the R.E. had their officers largely selected by the Mining Institutions of Great Britain; labour battalions obtained contractors and contractors' agents for their officers. In fact, it is reported that for the R.E. the supply of candidates with suitable technical qualifications has always exceeded the demand. For the A.S.C. the Institute of Chartered Accountants and of Civil Engineers and large business firms were asked to recommend candidates; and among those who received temporary commissions are to be found business men, chartered accountants, experts in provisions and forage, men with knowledge of horses and motors, and men used to controlling large bodies of workmen. For the R.A.M.C. there has been little difficulty in obtaining the vastly increased personnel required since the war began, the medical officers being all drawn from the ranks of qualified medical practitioners in the United Kingdom and the Dominions; in addition to these the War Office has obtained a large staff of specialists for work with the troops, *e. g.* bacteriologists, ophthalmologists, aurists, radiologists, dermatologists, experts in tropical diseases, etc.

On the whole, from these various sources the pick of officers for the first, and in a less degree for the second, new army was excellent. For the later formations of the new armies the pick was perhaps not so good. The nucleus of Regular officers, thinly spread over the first two armies, had been almost entirely used up; and the best of the young men available from the Universities, the public schools and the professions were no longer so easily obtained. One reason for the difficulty in securing such good men for

commissions after the first three months was that many of the most suitable young men unable to obtain commissions in the early days, would not wait in their ardour to fight, and enlisted in the ranks of the Artists' Rifles, the University and Public Schools' Brigade, and other similar corps. Afterwards it sometimes became difficult to persuade commanding officers to part with such men from the ranks of their battalions when they were sorely needed to take up commissions. Eventually, however, most of them became officers, and, as will be described later, other means of finding excellent material for the officers' ranks were discovered.

It will be noticed, however, that a great many of these early appointed officers, whose primary business was to train the raw recruits of the new armies, were themselves untrained to any military duties. At first some attempt at training was made. On the 12th August, 1914, classes of instruction for young officers were organized at six centres under senior officers of the Officers' Training Corps; to these centres the junior officers granted temporary commissions were sent for a month before taking up their duties. But even this short period of training was abolished by Lord Kitchener when he found that it entailed leaving new formations with hardly any subalterns; and during the remaining months of 1914 there was practically no special training given to infantry subalterns with temporary commissions. Early, however, in 1915 the system of a month's training for new officers was revived and extended, so that 2,610 officers a month could get some instruction before joining their units. A month's instruction even to the most zealous

subaltern is obviously very little; all that can be said is that at the time this was the best that could be given. Gradually, as the war progressed, opportunities for training officers became more ample.

For all practical purposes, therefore, most of the infantry subalterns of the new armies had to train themselves during the first five months of the war as best they could in the intervals of training their men.

If the officers were untrained, the non-commissioned officers of the new armies were in the main even less trained. The needs of the Expeditionary Force were, in this case also, considered paramount; consequently very few experienced N.C.Os. were left in the country; and there was considerably less field of choice for them than for officers in the first instance. To supply the need, the Army Council encouraged by every means in its power the re-enlistment of ex-warrant and N.C. officers as well as discharged soldiers up to the age of fifty to help in the training of the new armies. A great many of them did re-enlist, and although some of the older ones, who had lost touch with the army and forgotten their drill, or had acquired unmilitary habits, proved worse than useless, the rest were quite invaluable. But these re-enlisted N.C.Os. were a mere drop in the bucket, and the N.C.O. cadres had at first to be filled up at a venture from those recruits who seemed to give most promise of picking up the drill and discipline quickly. Many mistakes were made in the choice of N.C.Os., and for a long time the good N.C.O., who is even more a result of long training and good habits than the good officer, was a comparatively rare phenomenon in the new battalions. This circumstance was undoubtedly a

serious hindrance to training in the early stages, since a good grounding in drill and discipline depends more on the N.C.O. than on the officer. Any one who has had the opportunity of seeing a really good serjeant of the old school, with his mingled humour and severity, putting a squad of recruits through their paces, and contrasting him with some of the serjeants of August, 1914, at the same job, will realize this. However, there was at least this good result of the weakness of N.C.Os., that the officers themselves often had to do the N.C.O.'s job as well as their own, and became thereby all the more proficient and all the better able to understand their men.

§ 7.—*Organization of the New Armies.*

Before approaching the subject of the early stages of training, it will be convenient to state shortly what organization was given to the new armies.

The First and Second New Armies were formed on the following basis:—Each regiment of the British Army was given one new battalion composed of new recruits enlisted for the period of the war, the only exceptions being in the case of certain Irish and Fusilier regiments, where two new battalions were raised, to form the Irish and Light Divisions. The Third New Army was formed of battalions raised in those areas where recruiting was best, chiefly in the Northern and Western Commands. After these three armies were completed, further recruits were posted to reserve battalions; as soon as any of these reserve battalions attained a strength of 2,700 a new battalion was drawn from it, and these additional battalions

were formed into a Fourth New Army. Later these Fourth Army battalions were re-converted into reserves known as second reserve battalions, and used for drafting purposes; they thus no longer formed part of the fourth army. But another Fourth New Army and a Fifth were constituted about the middle of 1915 from the locally raised battalions, which had hitherto been scattered about the country doing their training independently.

The Territorial Force was also being expanded. The formation of a second line T.F. unit was authorized in the case of every original unit of which at least sixty per cent. of the strength volunteered for Imperial service. These second line units were first used to find drafts; later on the second line divisions were formed and a third line raised to supply drafts.

To make clear the system of organization, the battalions of the Manchester Regiment may be taken as an example. The 1st (63rd Foot) and 2nd (96th Foot) Manchesters are the old Regular battalions. The 3rd and 4th Manchesters, originally militia battalions, are the special reserve battalions, used for finding drafts for the 1st and 2nd battalions and for home defence work. The 5th to the 10th battalions (inclusive), each of which had a first, second and third line unit, are Territorials raised in the Manchester regimental district. The remaining battalions have been raised since the war began. The 11th belonged to the First, the 12th to the Second, the 13th to the Third New Army; the 16th to the 23rd battalions (inclusive) were all locally raised "Manchester City" battalions, and with the 24th, raised at Oldham, formed part of the second edition of the Fourth New Army; all these are

technically called "Service" battalions. The 14th battalion was in the original Fourth New Army as a Service battalion, but is now a reserve draft-producing battalion for the 11th, 12th and 13th battalions, while the 25th-27th "local reserve battalions" perform a similar function for the locally raised battalions.[1]

The system of organization adopted for the new armies is thus fairly simple, and had the great merit of continuing the former army organization. Thus, however many units were created from the recruits that came pouring in, they could all be attached to original regimental formations. In this way the proud traditions of almost every regiment in the British Army could be taken as the means of stimulating emulation in those newly attached to the regiment.

§ 8.—*The First Stage of Training.*

In previous sections some of the initial difficulties of training the new armies have been described. These difficulties were immensely accentuated by the rapidity with which the new formations had to be created. An Army Order of the 21st August, 1914, constitutes the First New Army, consisting of six divisions, or roughly 110,000 men. Three weeks later the Second, also of six divisions, was constituted, and only three days later the Third and the original Fourth New Army[2] were officially established. Although the new Fourth and Fifth, composed of locally raised battalions, were

[1] Some modification of this organization has since been adopted; but the original system described above lasted for the first three years of the War.

[2] See above, § 7.

not created until after the middle of 1915, their constituent parts had been dotted about the country as separate units since the previous September, when authority had been given to raise these battalions; and they required training as much as the regularly raised units. Nor even do these five armies—or six, if the reserve battalions in the original Fourth New Army are reckoned—which amounted roughly to between six and seven hundred thousand men, represent anything like the total amount of men under training in the United Kingdom during the first year of the war, since the old and new Territorial units and other miscellaneous corps have also to be taken into account. During 1915 an average number of over a million troops were being trained in the United Kingdom, apart from the armies fighting on the different fronts. The training of the first three new armies had this advantage over that of the others, that from the first each of their divisions was concentrated on one training ground. It was thus possible to secure uniformity of training, to economize in instructors, and to develop early the very important quality of *esprit de corps* for the division, which is the smallest self-contained unit in the British Army, and which has played a larger part on the imaginative side than in any previous war waged by us. Towards the end of the training all the divisions of one army would be brought together to one centre, so that they had the opportunity of combined training for a longer or shorter period before they were sent overseas.

The local battalions of the Fourth and Fifth New Armies and the second line Territorial battalions, raised originally as draft-producing units for their

first line battalions, were not so fortunate. For long periods these units had to do their training billeted in the districts where they were raised, or in isolated camps, and were rarely collected into divisions until the first three armies had completed their training and left the country. For these men the training of the first year was a vastly more difficult matter than for the first three armies. Being generally scattered about in billets, they took longer to learn discipline, and as they often had to straggle individually to the drill ground from considerable distances, the time available for drill was correspondingly limited. The equipment, arms and clothing for the first three new armies was scarce enough, as has already been explained; for the remainder of the new armies it was generally a question of a long wait for every article obtained. Again, for the first three new armies some definite system of training could be elaborated, and it was possible to watch it as a whole and correct mistakes as they became apparent; for the others the training had to depend almost entirely on the idiosyncrasies of the commanding officers, and the units were so scattered that continuous supervision and control by headquarters' inspectors were almost impossible. The turn for systematic instruction for the Fourth and Fifth Armies and the Territorials came when the earlier armies had been despatched abroad, but it must be borne in mind that throughout this first year these less fortunate units were acquiring what training they could under unexampled difficulties, and in some cases making themselves exceedingly proficient. The following description of the early stages of training is, however, mainly intended to show how the training

proceeded when it was possible to bring it under some sort of system.

When the recruits were marched off from the recruiting stations or depôts to the division to which they were assigned their first impression was that they were just units in a mere mob of men, the only resemblance of which to a military force was the presence of two or three Regular officers and eight or ten N.C.Os. per battalion. They and their fellow-soldiers were mostly in civilian dress; no rifles or equipment were at first available; the nominal rolls were not accurate, and it was difficult for the officers to keep tale of the men supposed to be under them; and the accommodation available for them was not in all cases sufficient and adequate as a protection against the weather.

Naturally it took some little time for such mobs to get a little sorted out, most of the men being entirely unknown to one another, ignorant of army methods and with very few more enlightened to guide them. It was not so much like a crowd of new boys at school, but as if some big public school were being started with an entirely new set of boys and an inadequate and inexperienced staff of masters. Yet they were soon shaken down into some sort of order, helped very much by a peculiarity which is shared by almost every man when he first joins the army. On joining it, whatever his previous troubles may have been, whatever his personal or public anxieties, he almost invariably feels an immense relief at no longer being responsible for his way of life: however hard and uncomfortable his circumstances may be, he can at least luxuriate in the thought that the responsibility

for it all is on some one else's shoulders and that he need do nothing more than obey orders. Of course, with every soldier worth his salt this feeling soon passes, but while it lasts it is delicious, and has often proved an anodyne for the early hardships and troubles of the new recruit.

In an Army Order published shortly after the outbreak of war provision was made for the altered circumstances of training required by the necessity of getting men to the front at the earliest moment. For all arms courses of six months were laid down, three of these months being for the recruit stage. The actual time devoted to training in different units varied very considerably, according to the facilities they had enjoyed, their readiness to learn, and the requirements of the front; but in no case were complete units of the new armies sent out with less than nine months' training at home. The elaborate time-table for the six months' course could rarely be observed in all its details, but the following may be taken as a typical curriculum for one of the new army divisions:—

1. The first step was to inculcate the elementary principles of drill, discipline and personal cleanliness.

2. The second stage was marching, squad drill, physical training, bayonet and rifle exercises and digging.

3. Then came company training and musketry; cooking in the field and in barracks was taught at this stage; also semaphore signalling, judging distance, and rapid loading.

4. The next stage introduced the recruits to battalion training and life in billets. As more boots became available, more marching was possible. Dig-

ging in connection with tactical schemes was taught. Machine-gun training was given with dummy guns. The trained soldiers' course of musketry was fired. Technical units such as R.A., R.E., Signal Companies and Ambulances suffered from want of technical equipment at this stage, but had become well enough trained to make full use of it as it dribbled in. At this stage, too, divisional trains were distributed and the transport personnel of battalions was trained.

5. In the brigade and divisional training stage brigades and divisions went out for two or three days' marches, being fed by divisional trains, which drew food and forage from "refilling points." Night marching and digging and the relief and feeding of units in trenches were thoroughly taught.

6. The final stage brought the men to artillery practice in camp and rifle and machine-gun practice on the ranges and to interdivisional training.

Such, roughly, was the normal course of training for the divisions of the first three New Armies; for the rest, it only differed in that the early stages were much more protracted, and the final stage seemed never to approach. In all cases the training would have been more rapid had not the material aids—guns, rifles, proper hutting, good drill grounds, and so on—been so scarce. Some delays were caused also by the more or less frequent shifting of quarters from one camp or billeting area to another, for no division was trained entirely in one place. Some divisions or individual units were seriously hampered by the number of short sojourns they made in different areas.

During this course of training—we are now speaking of the first year of the war—it was not possible, as we

have already seen, to pay particular attention to the training of officers or N.C.Os.; they had mostly to learn their business as best they could in camp with the men; since even the short preliminary courses for second lieutenants on appointment had been suspended during the last four months of 1914. There were, however, a few short courses, to which a few officers and N.C.Os. could be sent, in special subjects, such as signalling, musketry and physical training; but the most useful special training was given by means of lectures and regimental tours under the direction of energetic and experienced seniors of the battalions. Officers of the more technical branches had rather better opportunities for preliminary training. Those newly appointed to the Royal Artillery, before joining their batteries, were generally sent to one of twelve reserve brigades established for training purposes, and then for a month's polish to Shoeburyness or Larkhill. But in the early days even this amount of preparation was not universal, and many had to join their batteries at once on appointment. Newly appointed R.E. officers, whose work is nothing if not technical, were the most favoured, since they were given a preliminary seven 'weeks' training at Chatham or another training centre in signalling or field work, but even so, unless they were well qualified beforehand, as most of them, indeed, were, this training was very short for men supposed to know the use and repair of telephones and telegraphs or the way to build or destroy a bridge, or how to meet the countless other emergencies with which a sapper is called upon to deal.

Considering the great difficulties and the short period available for training, it is hardly surprising

that many defects were noted by the inspectors of training in some of the new divisions. The most notable defects arose from inexperience and from the lack of equipment and the consequent want of practical skill at arms; and from restricted drill grounds, where proper manœuvres or even trench-work could not be carried out. Where the men were billeted near or in their homes cases of indiscipline and absenteeism were more frequent than in proper camps, but it is encouraging to note that faults of discipline were, on the whole, not common, and as the training progressed became very rare indeed. Of the various arms the most backward in proficiency seems to have been the artillery, nor is this to be wondered at. The artillery, which needs its proper equipment and arms more than any other branch in order to understand its duties, was the least well provided for in this respect. Nevertheless, even here, when the time came for firing tests, a large number of the new batteries fired surprisingly well with the latest guns and live ammunition and dial sights, which some of them had hardly seen before.

On the other hand, the general results of this brief and disturbed training were wonderful. Only nine months after embodiment the First New Army was sent to the front, being closely followed by the Second and Third; even some divisions of the Fourth and Fifth, whose education had been still more scrappy, were fit to go to the front barely more than a year after they had been raised, and none of them gave a bad account of themselves. The secret of this great triumph over difficulties lies chiefly in the magnificent spirit of all ranks. In these great voluntary armies

not a man held a commission or served in the ranks, but that he felt it his duty to fight for a just cause and had a love for his country which spurred him on to fight worthily for her and that cause. They all meant to be soldiers and of the best, such as their regiments and their army had sent forth in the past. If any special rank is to be picked out, it is undoubtedly true that the backbone of these new armies, especially in the earlier ones, was the junior subalterns. Mostly untrained or half-trained, they came to learn their work with their men, and had no false shame in telling them so—without any prejudice to discipline. Not content with the novel and exacting labours of the parade ground, they sat up late preparing their work for next day, studying military textbooks and practising problems of strategy and tactics : at mess hardly any junior subaltern talked anything but "shop." They helped their N.C.Os., and were helped by them, and put posers to the major and the colonel, which these as willingly tackled. They were, in fact, all keen and on their mettle, and as on the whole they had been well chosen for brain power and aptitude to command, they taught themselves and their men, too, as they went.

But while this tribute is especially due to the junior subalterns, it is also applicable in a greater or less degree to all ranks. There was everywhere a jolly determination to overcome difficulties somehow and to get on with the work. In spite of the hardships, there was little grumbling and no serious crime ; in fact, the reports on discipline after the first few months were almost invariably excellent. The health of the men, as is usually the case with those who put their whole

souls into their work, and who, besides, have good food, a regular, well-ordered life and splendid physical training, was excellent. To the excellence of the physical training given through the Army Gymnastic Staff instructors in improving the physique, quickening the brain, and giving push, confidence, discipline and jump to the recruits, every observer has borne his tribute.[1] But it was owing to the enterprise of officers and men themselves that many of their difficulties were smoothed away. When equipment necessary for training could not be obtained from the hard-beset War Office, the new armies did not sit down helplessly and give it up : they set to work improvising, borrowing or buying articles urgently required. Harness and saddlery would be lent by owners of stables in the neighbourhood of a camp, dummy guns were made by a carpenter in the battery, rough dial sights were manufactured by ingenious subalterns, flags for semaphore work were made by the men themselves, the officers clubbed together to buy a telephone set or field glasses or compasses or any rifles they could find on the market for their own and their men's instruction.

It would be difficult, perhaps, to convey a better idea of the spirit and training of the new armies than is to be found in Ian Hay's *The First Hundred Thousand*. This intimate account, however, may be supplemented by the considered judgment of an experienced general who, speaking of the training at one of the chief army centres, recalled the old peace days, when two divisions less one brigade taxed the

[1] A later chapter (X) will deal more at length with the physical training system of the army.

resources of the staff and the place to the full. Writing in April, 1915, he reported that there were five divisions in the same place, all working smoothly under no larger a staff and with less fuss made about all these divisions working in the field with their trains and ammunition columns than obtained before over an ordinary field day. The same authority, writing on the training of some of these new divisions, said that a mass of civilians had been transformed in less than eight months into an army which had more practical training for war than it had ever been possible to give to troops in England before. There was, he added, a feeling of confidence in all ranks, due partly to the organizing power of a short-handed staff, but chiefly to the keenness of all ranks to make themselves fit for the front.

CHAPTER VI

THE NEW SYSTEM OF TRAINING, 1916–17

Mens agitat molem

THE training and organization of the New Armies suffered from various causes during the first year and a half of war. Some of these have already been indicated, such as the irregular flow of recruits, the dearth of equipment and the scarcity of trained instructors. Another difficulty was, that the organization of armies and divisions had in some cases to be altered hurriedly, because certain units in them proved to be more backward than others in military proficiency, or because, owing to the numerous calls for men from Egypt, Mesopotamia, the Dardanelles, or France, formations were broken up to supply the reinforcements in the required numbers. Again, underlying all the other difficulties, were the inevitable hurry and confusion arising from the inauguration of new methods of recruiting and new methods of rapid training. This hurry led to a half-conscious belief that it was possible to improvise armies and to finish the war by short cuts. The short cuts were perhaps necessary at the time, owing to the crying need for men; but as soon as the yawning gaps at the front were closed and it began to be realized that the war was likely to be a matter of years, then short cuts were abandoned as much as possible.

Since the beginning of the year 1916, therefore, the training of the new soldiers has been organized on a much more satisfactory plan. One reason why this has been possible is that, since the introduction of the Group and Class system, the authorities at the War Office have had some means of calculating and regulating the numbers of men to be absorbed into the army and have thus been able to make forecasts of the training facilities they will require at any given time. Another reason is, that in the early days of the war many of the most experienced members of the General Staff at the War Office had been dispersed to the four winds, owing to the need of experienced staff officers at the front; and it was not until the autumn of 1915 that they could be spared from the field to strengthen the Staff at headquarters. As soon as that had taken place, the General Staff took in hand what was justly regarded to be one of its principal duties: a considered scheme of training for the army. It is, however, hardly necessary to point out here that such defects as there may have been in the first year's training were in no sense due to those responsible for the direction of that training. The difficulties they successfully overcame were little short of stupendous and, considering what those difficulties were, the results of the training given, as shown by the achievements of the New Armies at the front, are amazing. This early training is a credit to the powers of improvisation of our soldiers and a source of legitimate pride to those who organized, directed and watched it day by day.

By the beginning of 1916 the responsibility of the Military authorities to the manhood of the nation had become vast indeed. The large majority of the able-

bodied men of Great Britain were under their well-nigh absolute control. They could send them forth to meet victory, death or shattering wounds, or to perform any labour, which might seem to them necessary for the attainment of victory. In these circumstances, especially when a man had no longer a right to say "I will go or not, as I please," a peculiar obligation lay on the Army to see that those entrusted to it as instruments should be made as fit and efficient as humanly possible, to enable them to carry out the tasks in which they were to risk their own life and health and their country's honour.

Nay, more, some of the best minds in the army took an even wider view. Quite apart from the immediate purpose of the soldiers in this war, they felt that during the months, or years, if it so happened, that the pride of the nation's manhood was entrusted to their care, it rested with them to prove that the Army was a good nursery, not merely for soldiers but for citizens; and to ensure that the survivors from the accidents of war should emerge from their training in the British Army better, rather than worse, fitted to undertake their civil duties. Hitherto, the army had been a small and specialized profession, largely unknown and even to some extent suspect to the general population: here was an opportunity of popularizing it. The opportunity has been eagerly grasped. To quote the words of one of those responsible for the wonderful physical training system of the army: "I want," he said in effect, "as many as possible of the male population to pass through our hands for this physical training: in no other way can it be brought home to the whole nation how essential it is for our

national well-being to continue this training in peace as well as in war, for civilians as well as soldiers and especially for the children in our schools; for it is a system which quickens the mind as well as the body, and gives men, women and children a saner outlook, a clearer vision and a more alert disposition."

Here spoke the enthusiast; and fortunately there are many such enthusiasts in the British Army. The General Staff has found it necessary, among its other functions, to assume the duties of an education department and to face many of the problems which present themselves to those responsible for education in peace time. What is the best form of ground work for all training; how to avoid overlapping; how to secure a progressive system of military education for those rising from one grade to another; how to train specialists for the technical branches without allowing them to fall below that high standard of soldierly bearing, courage and discipline required of every soldier, whether he belongs to a Labour battalion, a railway company, the Infantry, the Cavalry, the Artillery, or the Flying Corps:—these are a few of the problems which have to be faced by those responsible for the New Armies. Many of them are obviously much akin to those which have been puzzling the civilian educational authorities for fifty years or more; they also have had to hold the balance between specialist and general training, and to find a system giving equal opportunity for all to get the best teaching. But the army in dealing with them have had two great advantages over the civilian education authorities: they are more accustomed to rough and ready methods of solving difficulties, and have had a

special stimulus to rapid decision in the overpowering necessity of a war that brooks no delay.

During the last year and three-quarters there has been a marked improvement in the methods and results of military training: but it must not be imagined that this progress is simply the result of that period of work. Most of the improvements have come about gradually, almost since the beginning of the war, in characteristically English fashion. Many valuable experiments in training are due to the initiative of resourceful and energetic officers, who have gradually obtained recognition for their methods by the good results they have been able to show. In other cases a pressing local need has led to an apparently haphazard experiment, which has proved so successful, that the need was discovered to be almost universal and the experiment adopted generally. Go about England or France and you will find everywhere evidence of these methods. A certain school is noted for its excellent work: you inquire how it arose, and find it was started on a very small scale in the first months of the war by an enterprising officer to meet the wants of eager young subalterns in his district who came to inquire from him about the latest methods of warfare. This unofficial class for the subalterns in this district proved so useful that it has been officially recognized, moved from its original cramped quarters and developed into one of the best equipped schools in the kingdom. Or you find the training particularly well organized in one of the Commands of the kingdom: it is, you are told, due almost entirely to the energy and capacity of one staff officer, who was not afraid of responsibility but did what was necessary.

In another command you will find a signalling school started three years ago by one officer with fourteen men under instruction, still directed by the same officer, but now containing over 1000 under instruction. The continuation schools, as they might be called, for officers resting from the trenches in France, are largely due to the happy experiment of a zealous officer who began with one modest school and was so successful that he has seen schools on the same model established behind the whole front in France. The same story could be told of the now popular system of physical training and games provided for the men at rest from the trenches, which soon take away their trench stiffness and set them up again as vigorous as ever.

The war has given many such capable enthusiasts their chance, men following humbly in the footsteps of Wolfe, who, even without the glories of Louisburg and Quebec, would have deserved a place in our military annals for the notable training that he gave to his regiment, or of Moore, whose training of the Light Division at Shorncliffe is a distinction even for the hero of Coruña. These men had been thinking out in peace time what they now have the opportunity of putting into practice, and it is something to see the eyes of one of them light up as he tells you—"Yes; this or that reform is what some of us were vainly trying to get through five or ten years ago; now that the actual need is felt, we can accomplish it." While all credit is due to the originators, it must not be forgotten that at least as much credit is due to the enlightened men at the War Office and in the higher commands, who have assumed the ultimate responsi-

bility for these experiments. Far from showing itself unduly conservative in its methods, the Army, in the stress of this war, has proved itself not only open to new ideas but ready to encourage them. From the first days of the war, Lord Kitchener and his staff, and their successors afterwards, have been open to consider and adopt all changes in the system of training required by the changing methods of war; and they have helped those responsible for forming soldiers to find out the needs of the moment and the best way of meeting them.

Two instances will suffice to show the readiness of those in authority to hold the door open for new ideas. The first was the publication of "Notes from the Front." [1] These contained accounts of all that experience at the front teaches and were issued periodically to all training camps and schools to keep instructors posted in all the most recent developments of trench warfare. Even more fruitful was the plan, adopted quite early in the war, of "Cook's Tours" as they are spoken of in officers' messes, for keeping officers responsible for training in touch with the fighting line. From time to time parties of selected officers of units or from the staff of schools of instruction have been sent out for a week or ten days to France to learn what they can of the latest methods of fighting and to put their lessons into practice on their return. Artillery officers during these tours were sent to artillery observation posts to watch the effect of fire from guns in a position where the target is invisible; Infantry officers learned the methods of

[1] The form of these "Notes" has been slightly altered, and they now appear in the form of pamphlets on Training, etc.

trench building, trench-reliefs, observation and fire discipline in the trenches; Engineer officers were shown on the ground how to plan out and improve trenches and to design and carry out mining operations; others went to study the latest devices in bomb-throwing or the intricacies of trench communications and aerial signals. These brief tours were of extraordinary help not only to the officers privileged to go upon them, but also to their mess-mates and men under them, for the living touch which they were able to impart to their instruction on their return. They have been useful throughout, for there is constantly some new contrivance or some progress in methods at the front; but at no time have they been more useful than in the first twelve or eighteen months of the war, when equipment was scarce in the training camps and the men who had witnessed the real thing were rare, while those under training were hungering for the voice of the man who was not merely speaking from the book but could tell them that he had seen the thing done, with the Germans a few yards away doing their utmost to prevent it. Invention was encouraged by these tours, since, though the equipment at home might still be deficient, the sight of what was needed at the front stimulated in the young officers, who had been there, resource in contriving makeshift equipment and schemes of training at home.

Without such means of bringing home to those engaged in training the actual methods of warfare at the front, there would have been a great danger of the home training becoming a dead and soulless affair of pedants teaching by rote. But this has always

been avoided. Not merely the subalterns and junior instructors who had all to learn, but commandants of schools, generals in charge of training, heads of departments at the War Office, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff and the Secretary of State have all been constantly refreshing their minds with the actual facts by business visits to the front. Thus, there has been the happiest flow of ideas between the soldier in the making at home and the practising soldier at the front, and between the man in charge of administration in England and the commander in the field. The training at home has been alive throughout; and in spite of dreary periods the men engaged in it have felt that they were always very near to the realities. This plan also quickens the sympathy between the Army in the field and the Army at home. This is an inestimable benefit, in keeping alive at the front the feeling that those at home are fitting themselves in the best way to take their place in the line, while those in training at home are constantly brought into relation with the facts of real warfare. Thus, by these constant comings and goings between all ranks of both armies, all feel that they are one army, with common interests for the national cause, let the immediate duty of any individual be in England, in France, or no matter where.

Another good result of this exchange of ideas is the recognition in England that the first impulse to changes in training should come from the seat of war, where the need is first and more immediately felt. Hence many of the more systematic methods of training took their origin in France, to remedy defects already apparent in the early training of the new

armies. The heavy casualties among officers in 1914 made it essential to replace them with others better trained than it was possible to train the new "temporary" officers in England at that period. Accordingly, as early as the winter of 1914, the Artists' Rifle Corps, then in France, was converted into a unit of the Officers' Training Corps, to which men in the ranks recommended for commissions were sent as cadets for a period of training more exhaustive than they could at that time obtain in England. This led eventually to the present system of officer cadet battalions in England. Similarly the Expeditionary Force took the lead in starting bombing schools, schools for officers and N.C.Os. and a staff course. But with these schools in France we are not at present concerned, except so far as it is important to remember that from them came the germ of the system now adopted in England.

Most of the detailed reforms effected in military training since the beginning of the war have, as we have indicated, been the result of individual enterprise. These reforms still had to be co-ordinated: hence the great reform in the training of soldiers accomplished by the General Staff during 1916 has been the introduction of a well-ordered system. Since the beginning of the war there has been a constant process of change in methods, a process in which old methods found to be useless have been ruthlessly scrapped, and a process to which there is likely to be no end, as long as the war lasts. But by this time the local experiments of the first year by individuals, both in France and England, have been tested and the gold sifted from the dross: it has been possible to

elaborate a consistent plan of progressive training from the recruit to the battalion commander. In a word the scattered threads have been gathered together and woven into a recognizable pattern. Though this has been the case, it must not be thought that the period of improvisation during the first eighteen months was wasted. Had it not been for such a period the valuable experiments on which the present plan is largely based could not have been made; and the nation owes a deep debt of gratitude to the often unknown enthusiasts whose work has been garnered with such good results.

At present the training at home is divided between two authorities, the Directorate of Staff Duties at the War Office and the Military Training Section under the F.M. C.-in-C. Home Forces.

The Directorate of Staff Duties is responsible for that department of training, which is the basis of all the rest, the production of officers, and is therefore responsible for—

(i) Sandhurst and Woolwich;

(ii) The Officer Cadet units where men recommended for commissions are tested for their duties;

(iii) The Staff Course, at which officers are trained for staff duties in the field.

The Commander-in-Chief of the Home Forces, on the other hand, directs all the other training establishments in the country. These include signal schools, musketry schools, schools of instruction for N.C.Os., bombing schools, anti-gas schools and cookery centres. There are also schools of instruction for infantry officers to train company commanders,

and there is one central Senior Officers' school to train officers for the command of battalions. In addition there are a certain number of central training establishments: such are the principal schools of musketry, the signal service training centre, trench mortar schools, the Headquarters Gymnasium and various training centres for corps like the R.A., R.E., Mechanical Transport, etc. He is also responsible for the training of recruits and of all men quartered in the United Kingdom.

CHAPTER VII

THE TRAINING OF OFFICERS

Before dealing with the existing training of officers it will be well briefly to recall the amount of military education considered necessary for officers of the old army and to contrast with it the amount found possible during the early stages of the war.

Until August, 1914, candidates for commissions in the army were chosen in the ordinary course on the results of competitive examinations which required a good standard of general education. Having been successful in these examinations candidates for the infantry, cavalry and A.S.C., went through a year and a half's course of military training at Sandhurst, those destined for the R.A. or R.E. had two years at Woolwich. There were also other means of obtaining regular commissions through the Universities or the Special Reserve, but in both these cases some military training in an Officers' Training Corps or a Special Reserve unit was a condition of appointment. Having obtained his commission the subaltern's education was by no means completed. He had a period of six months' recruit drill; courses of instruction in the regiments and commands were also available for subalterns; in addition, more specialized instruction was given in the Hythe School of Musketry, which every cavalry and infantry officer had at some

period of his career to attend, and in the Schools of Gunnery, Signalling, etc. Moreover, for every step in rank up to that of lieutenant-colonel an officer had to pass a qualifying examination, which ensured a considerable amount of private study in addition to the knowledge he acquired by the performance of his regimental duties. The Staff College was open to a select number of officers chosen either by competition or on nomination by the Army Council. Here they received instruction in the higher branches of military science for a period of two years, to qualify for staff work.

After August, 1914, the Sandhurst and Woolwich system was maintained for regular commissions, but the time allowed the cadets was reduced at first to three and six months respectively.[1] But the courses at the Staff College entirely ceased and for want of instructional staff during several months little specialized instruction could be given at other institutions such as Hythe. Those receiving temporary commissions were even worse off: during the first month of the war they received some instruction from the staffs of certain Officers' Training Corps; then for some months no special instruction at all was given to the temporary 2nd lieutenants. Early in 1915 the O.T.C. form of instruction was resumed and extended to all New Army officers on appointment, and several of the O.T.C. staffs undertook voluntarily in the vacations to prepare schoolmasters and other zealous patriots for military duties in case they should be required as officers. So far as it went, the O.T.C. instruction was

[1] The course at Sandhurst has now been lengthened to eight months, and at Woolwich to one year.

better than none, but the bare month's course was little in which to learn even the first smattering of an officer's duty. Moreover, the O.T.C. units were not all of equal efficiency; some set a high standard, but this, unfortunately, was not attained by the rest. However, such as it was, this method of preliminary instruction was continued throughout 1915, the only modification being that from August onwards the period of training was lengthened from four to five weeks.

One result of this rapid training was that officers were nominally ready for service before they were needed in the field. Thus at certain periods during 1915 the supply of junior officers was in excess of the actual requirements: the excess, of course, was only temporary, since all these officers were bound to be needed as the army went on increasing and as casualties occurred at the front; but, meanwhile, they were rather in the way if posted to their battalion. To meet this difficulty Young Officers' Companies attached to Reserve brigades were formed early in 1915 with the idea of giving them a more thorough training than was possible during their month at the schools of instruction. A further modification was then introduced by concentrating several of these Young Officers' Companies into groups, three companies forming one group, with a capable officer to command and supervise its training. Thus a more uniform standard of instruction was obtained. This method finally gave way, in February, 1916, to the methodical and progressive system of training for officers which now exists. By this system a more adequate training is given to new officers, and

provision is made for completing the gaps in the education of those already commissioned.

(i) *The Officer Cadet Battalions.*

One of the great objections to the early methods of selecting and training temporary officers was that they were often appointed very much in the dark, and that when once appointed it was very difficult to deprive them of their commissions, however unsuitable they might prove. After the first few months of the war, when the excellent supply of candidates from the O.T.Cs., the universities and from abroad, had been exhausted, some of the men appointed to commissions were not quite up to the standard, but except in the very rare cases in which they committed some grave offence rendering them liable to sentence by court-martial, it was felt to be too strong a step to take away commissions already received. The training also, as we have seen, was not entirely adequate. By the new system, introduced in February, 1916, temporary commissions, except in a few special corps, are granted only to men who have already had training in the ranks. A candidate for a commission must in the first instance be recommended from personal knowledge by his commanding officer. If the recommendation is approved by the brigade commander and the War Office, the man is then sent for special training to an officer cadet unit. Each arm of the service now has one or more officer cadet units, the largest number naturally being assigned to the infantry: the system of education and organization is in its general lines the same for all. In these officer cadet units the men under training retain their former

rank, so that if at any time during the course of training or in the final examination a man proves unsuitable for commissioned rank, he can at once be returned to his unit without any such difficulty as arose under the old system, in depriving an incompetent officer of his commission.

One result of this new order that candidates for commissions should previously have passed through the ranks, combined with the fact that all men of military age are now liable to regular service, was that the *raison d'être* of most of the senior O.T.C. units has temporarily disappeared. In fact, the only reason for the continued existence of some of them is that boys leaving school for the university, under military age, can receive in them preliminary training for a few months. Two of them, however, the Inns of Court Corps and the Artists' Rifles were retained at their full establishment. These two battalions were kept as units to which specially qualified young men from junior divisions of the O.T.C. or straight from civil life could be sent to get two months' training in the ranks before they were sent to cadet battalions affiliated to these two corps. In this way the rigidity of the rule is tempered by practical common sense, and the good officer material is not wasted.

The course of instruction in a cadet unit is normally four months, longer therefore than the course given in the period between August, 1914, and June, 1916, to candidates for regular commissions at Sandhurst; in certain exceptional cases, however, when a man shows himself especially well qualified, the duration of the course may be reduced. The syllabus of instruction for infantry cadets during the four months

comprises practical training in infantry work, musketry, bombing, field engineering, camps and bivouacs, trench warfare, anti-gas measures, and revolver shooting, and lectures in discipline, moral, interior economy, routine, the causes and history of the war, sanitation, and topography, first aid, messages and reports, official correspondence and other miscellaneous duties of an officer. For all cadets the points on which especial stress is laid are: leadership, the cultivation of initiative and self-confidence, a high standard of drill and discipline, care of arms and smartness of turn-out, close co-operation with other arms and a knowledge of the use of the map, of the King's Regulations and of Military Law. In short, "the object of the course is to turn out a young officer fit to be of immediate practical use to his regiment in quarters and in the field."

Even for men already trained in the ranks the time available for this large programme is small, when it is considered that the object of the course is, not merely to give the cadets a knowledge of military duties, but still more to train them to impart this knowledge to others, and at the same time to fit men who had hitherto obeyed orders to obtain the self-mastery and the self-confidence necessary to enable them to give orders. For the success of the scheme the quality of the instructors and the spirit in which they envisage their task are of first-rate importance. The commandants of these training units have mostly been taken from among the regimental officers of the old army, men who have always regarded the army as their profession and are filled with a love of its best traditions. To their professional capacity the

commandants of most of these units add qualities needed more than anything else: sympathy and a contagious enthusiasm. Many of the cadets have to be lifted to a different plane of vision, to a different standard of self-control from that to which they were used as privates; and it needs a man of rare personality to accomplish this. Much also depends on the staff of instructors. The battalions are now so large that the commandants are unable to know each man personally, as some of them made a point of doing in the early days; hence an added responsibility falls on the company commanders and their subordinates, who are attached to one set of men for the whole course of instruction and thus get to know them thoroughly. Of those instructors, the company commanders and assistants include regular, special reserve and territorial officers, besides some who hold temporary commissions, many of them men of first rate university or business education. By a wise provision the commandants are encouraged to select as far as possible their assistant instructors, so that they are able most effectively to influence the tone of the unit. This tone is, as far as possible, intended to be that of Sandhurst or Woolwich or of our best public schools: a tone of discipline obtained by trust and a reasonable amount of liberty based on self-respect and *esprit d'armée*. The cadets are given a special uniform, and are encouraged to act up to their uniform and their future rank. They very soon come to put away the childish things of the past and to rise to the trust with which they are treated.

The spirit in which they are treated may be seen from the following extracts from a typical address

given by a commandant to his cadets on first arrival. After a few words about the reasons for these cadet corps, he proceeds :—

"There has always been an open door to success and fame for such officers as worked hard and had determination. The open doors are wider now than ever and there are more of them. I ask each of you to ponder on this matter and to believe me when I tell you that I have never found an officer who worked, who did not come through. Only ill-health and death stand in your way. The former you can guard against in a great measure. The latter comes to us all, and to a soldier a soldier's death is the finest of all.

"Fear of death does not exist to the man who has led a good and honest life."

Then on the subject of discipline :—

"I cannot speak too seriously on this subject. It is the beginning and end of all your lives as well as of your military career. It consists in a cheerful and prompt obedience to orders. It can only be acquired by your personal attention to every minute detail. You must discipline your bodies and your minds; your bodies by keeping them healthy and strong, your minds by prayer and deep thought. Think what your personal example means to those under you who have not had the same benefit of education." To illustrate these principles he has some practical common-sense advice, and concludes by urging on them to play games: "One of the chief differences between the British Army and that of our chief enemy has been the way in which we have encouraged games among the men. . . . Recollect that war is very like a great game. Dogged determination to win has often pulled a losing team out of the fire, and that same spirit has

been seen, time after time, in this campaign. To ' play the game ' is a grand motto, and means straight and fair dealing with one's enemy and never to succumb to his views."

One essential point recognized in all these officer cadet units is that each man starts on an absolute equality with the others. Some may have come from their former units with the rank of serjeant-major, or serjeant or corporal, some may have been merely privates; some may have had a first-class university education, others be board-school boys; they may have come from the old country or from the colonies, have had more than a year's experience in the trenches or merely a few months' training on parade grounds at home: but directly they come to the cadet units all outward distinctions vanish and all have an equal chance of proving their worth for higher command. As the training progresses, all are in turn picked out for acting non-commissioned rank. This initial equality is a very useful feature in these units, as it makes it clear to all that nothing is to be taken for granted and that each man, instead of resting on his past laurels, must show the elasticity necessary for a fresh start on lines hitherto strange to him.

Of all the officer cadet battalions perhaps the most interesting are the four quartered at Oxford and Cambridge, two at each university. The cadets all live in college rooms and have their meals in the college halls: they attend church parade in the college chapels and are allowed the use of the college cricket and football grounds for drilling. The college dons who are in residence take almost as much interest in them as their own instructors and commandants: the

university clubs and institutions are thrown open to them: in a word, they are made free of the most splendid and historical educational buildings in the kingdom, and if they are so minded have some opportunity of drinking in the fine traditions and the haunting charm of these old seats of English learning and civilization. Most of them are so minded, and all unconsciously draw therefrom some of the pride in English institutions and of the best English manners which sit so well on a British officer. Many of them, who have had the chance of spending their four months' officer training at one of these universities, dwell fondly on the privilege given to them and vow that if they come back from the war, they will complete there the education so happily begun. Among those who feel the charm most deeply are cadets drawn from overseas contingents; and it was a happy decision of the War Office to send cadets from such contingents to take their training in a battalion quartered in one of these ancient universities.

The success of the officer cadet units is now well established. No doubt the training is not long enough to make a complete officer in all cases, but it is an immense improvement on any training previously thought possible during the war: again, the material is not always of the best, although it is certainly the best available in the stress of war when wider strata must be tapped. The chief advantage over any previous system is that it is possible to winnow out the unfit on some established principle by the agency of officers in constant contact with them. But this process, thanks to the careful selection made in the first instance by commanding officers, brigadiers and

the War Office, is not often necessary: in fact, of the thousands of cadets hitherto sent to these training units, a small percentage only have been returned as unfit to their former regiments; while of those who have passed through a course to take up a commission no single case has yet been reported of an unsatisfactory officer.

(ii) *Schools of Instruction for Officers.*

Since the introduction of the officer cadet units with their careful training, the need for the Young Officers' Schools of Instruction connected with O.T.C. units and the Young Officers' Groups, which attempted to give the same training in less time, has gradually disappeared. On the other hand, although the cadets at the end of their four months are supposed to be fit to take up the ordinary duties of a subaltern in a platoon, they have not had time to learn the more advanced tactical work which is required of a company commander or even sometimes of a platoon commander. Moreover, there are still some temporary officers of the 1914–15 period, who have never had regular training in anything but the most elementary duties; and many officers are only too glad to get an occasional "refresher" course. Schools of instruction have therefore been established to which junior officers are periodically sent for a six to eight weeks' course. For admission to these schools an officer must have performed at least three months' regimental duty as subaltern, and have been reported on as fit for higher training; or, in the case of officers who have returned from an expeditionary force, they

are selected from those who have already shown themselves to possess the power of leadership. Thus no subaltern would proceed direct from his cadet battalion to one of these schools, but he would have at least three months in which to feel his feet as an officer and accustom himself to drilling men and acquiring self-confidence. When the schools were started in March, 1916, the subalterns who came to the first courses had been educated under the old system, and a very small percentage of them were up to the standard required, but as the subalterns' ranks are gradually being filled from the cadet units, the standard of those attending these schools is gradually rising. On the other hand, owing to the call for officers to replace casualties at the front, the ordered progress of the cadet to his regiment at home for three months and then to an officers' school of instruction cannot in most cases be followed: for many have gone to the front before the passing of the first three months: in their case the divisional, corps and army schools in France are available to supplement their tactical education.

The curriculum given in these officers' schools has for its object the production of an officer capable of commanding and administering a company in the field. The following allocation of work during an eight weeks' course in one of these schools is fairly typical.

The study of tactics absorbs the largest number of hours during the course, and under that heading are included not only lectures and demonstrations on the ground, but actual practice by day and night of tactical work in the open and in trench warfare with

troops. The commandant of the school, from which this programme is taken, lays great store on tactical schemes in the open, so that the officers may not be misled into thinking that the present trench warfare on the western front is the only possible method of warfare. Other subjects of instruction are topography, musketry and field engineering. In order to give reality to the tactical schemes, some men are attached to the school for use in skeleton formation. Under the head of law and administration, a complete course is given in the duties of company commanders as to the discipline and internal arrangements of their companies, and their functions on a court-martial are clearly demonstrated by means of model court-martial proceedings conducted before all the students. The course is strenuous: the day's work in the field or the lecture room lasts from 8.30 to 5.45, with occasional night work in addition; leave is sparingly given: and the utmost punctuality and rigorous discipline are exacted.

(iii) *The Senior Officers' Course.*

When the Command Schools of Instruction for officers were first established under an Army Council Instruction of March, 1916, it was proposed to complete the educational ladder for the regimental officer by courses at one, if not more centres, "with a view to giving such higher instruction to selected company commanders as will fit them for the command of a battalion." This scheme of senior officers' courses remained in abeyance for some time, but in October, 1916, the first was started. The importance attached

to this course was emphasized by the appointment of a brigadier-general as commandant of the school, one who was commanding a Brigade in the Field and had already worked as a pioneer of more advanced military education for the New Armies when in charge of one of the Army Schools in France. The instructors are all men with regular commissions who have proved their capacity at the front, and who, besides their practical experience, have studied the theory of their profession. The officers who attend the course are captains, majors, or even lieutenant-colonels, all of them picked out as likely, by their gallantry and capacity, soon to be called upon to command a battalion. The school being designed principally to make up for the deficiencies unavoidable in the first year's hurried training of the New Armies, the officer students are selected from regular, New Army and territorial units. Most of the officers at the course have been for over a year in France or elsewhere at the front, and though many of them have done glorious service at Neuve Chapelle, Loos, or on the Somme, or in the daily grind of watching and waiting in the trenches, they have had few opportunities of keeping themselves up to date in military knowledge.

When, therefore, they come to this course they begin again almost from the start. They are given squads of men to drill in the elementary duties of forming fours and marching off: and it is surprising how useful "baby work," such as this, proves in teaching them to develop the commander's watchful eye for mistakes, and the commander's compelling voice. They are then taught by progressive stages to explain clearly to their squads the object of ele-

mentary tactics, to give them proper orders for carrying out simple schemes, and to keep a sharp look-out on the way their orders are obeyed. The instructors are numerous enough to allow one for every ten officers engaged in the course, and these instructors not only watch them at their work in the field but daily take them apart into some class-room where problems that have arisen are informally discussed and solved in consort. This "baby-work" forms the main occupation for the first week or so: then comes more advanced training in company and battalion drill, accompanied by tactical schemes of increasing difficulty. Besides this drill work in the field the officers are kept up to the mark by practice in bombing, musketry, the use of the machine gun and riding. On this framework of practice is built up in the minds of the students a richer knowledge of the theory of their profession by lectures on the use of the different branches of the army, on the various aspects and problems of war and on the higher questions of strategy illustrated by general history. These lectures are given not only by the commandant and his staff but also by heads of departments in the War Office and by historians and men of letters. To crown all, much attention is devoted to a subject of supreme importance, the right teaching of the traditions and spirit of all that is best in the British Army, whence proceed its sense of discipline, its moral, its gallantry and courtesy.

The enthusiasm with which the students work is alone enough to show that the school is successful. Perhaps its most useful and attractive side is that it gives men, who for months or even years have been

able to think of nothing but their immediate duty in the trenches, an opportunity of garnering their experiences, reflecting in comparative leisure on the lessons they teach, and taking a wider view of war's problem than the narrow outlook of trench warfare permits. After undergoing this course they are undoubtedly better fitted to meet all the changes and chances of battle and inspire greater confidence in the men they lead.

(iv) *The Staff Course.*

So far we have been dealing with the system of instruction for the infantry officer, who follows the regular course of promotion in his regiment. There is also a very important part of the army organization which is somewhat out of this regular course—the staff. One of the difficulties with our largely increased armies has been to obtain a sufficient supply of adequately trained staff-officers. There is a good deal of misconception, not entirely confined to civilians, about the importance of staff work both at headquarters and in the divisions and brigades. A widely spread notion about the staff-officer is that he is a man with red tabs who has very little to do except to swagger about in his "brass hat" at a safe distance from the firing line and display occasional bursts of misplaced energy, which interferes with the serious work of the regimental officers. Such notions are now a travesty of the truth. In the words of a distinguished soldier, "The present war is a war of preparation more than a war of operation, a war of government more than a war of armies, and victory will be

not only to the bravest but above all to the most intelligent," *i. e.* to the army with the most efficient staff.

It may help to understand the importance of staff work to give a brief sketch of the personnel of a division and a brigade headquarters. To assist the divisional general there are three General Staff officers, whose duty is to collect information about the enemy, to be in close relations with the brigades composing their division, with other divisions and with corps and army headquarters, and to issue the detailed operation orders necessary for carrying out the general's intentions: parallel with these general staff officers there are three "A" and "Q" branch officers, the A.A. and Q.M.G., the D.A.A. and Q.M.G. and the D.A.Q.M.G., whose business is to enforce discipline and make all the necessary arrangements for billeting, transport, rations and supply of ammunition needed to secure the smooth working of the general's programme. In the brigade there are only two staff officers, the Brigade Major and the Staff Captain. The onerous and responsible nature of a staff officer's duties may be illustrated by an enumeration of some of the duties which fall to the lowest in rank of all staff officers in the field—the staff captain.

These duties are:—

To deal with all states from units (A.F.B. 213).

To arrange about the inspection of drafts by the Brigadier.

To have the strength of units and of special duty corps always up to date.

To submit lists of casualties and unfit.

To help the medical officers to enforce sanitation.
To help the chaplain about burials and send reports to the Graves Registration Commission.
The discipline of Brigade H.Q.
Martial Law.
Prisoners of War.
Police.
Personal Services (of officers).
Pay.
Promotions and Appointments; Honours and Awards.
Routine duties (*e. g.* Guards, fatigues, etc.).
Ceremonial.
Allotment of billeting areas,
and of such details as Feet drying rooms.
Clothes drying rooms.
Bath houses.
Billet stores.
Recreation.
Transport.
Remounts and Veterinary service.
Post.
Leave.
Supplies in connection with quartermasters of units.
Ammunition, equipment, clothing supplies.
To see to the provision of tools, etc., for battle and during battle supply.
To see units after battle and see to their comfort.

And besides all this he has to help the Brigade Major in his duties, and act as orderly officer to the Brigadier.

Much of this work is, of course, within the scope of a man of ordinary business training, who also has the

virtue of common sense; but, in addition, he must also possess an intimate knowledge of army organization, of the functions of the different arms and of the various tactical problems likely to present themselves.

The staff of the original expeditionary force had been well trained, most of them having been through the admirable two years' course at the Staff College, while many of those in the "Q" branch had studied administrative and business problems at the London School of Economics. When Staff Officers had to be provided for the new armies, plenty of men among the new officers had the business and common-sense qualities needed, but few of them had the additional military qualifications. The previously trained staff officers were too few to go round, and there were no more forthcoming, since the Staff Colleges were closed as soon as the war began.[1] At first, there was no time to supply regular staff training; any new staff officers appointed had to be trained to their work by rule of thumb, and they were lucky if they found one experienced Staff Officer to advise them on their duties.

In the winter of 1915–16 a staff course had been started in France, and early in 1916 some attempt at staff training was made in England. Officers recommended for staff duties were picked out by G.Os. C. and sent to learn their business on home staffs. If a man showed promise he was then attached to a staff on the Expeditionary Force for further instruction, and, finally, on passing this test satisfactorily,

[1] The Germans, on the other hand, have kept their Staff College open throughout.

he would be given a staff appointment at home or abroad.

Valuable as this training was, it had the serious defect of lacking theoretical instruction in the principles of staff work. The practical training on the staff to which a man might happen to be attached was excellent so far as it went, but in itself only helped him to deal with the problems that happened to arise while he was serving there. In April, 1916, therefore, a further improvement was made by adding to the practical training a course giving a more comprehensive view of staff duties in general. By an Army Council Instruction of that month the selection and training of officers for temporary staff appointments was laid down as follows:—The candidates for such appointments were to be selected by G.Os. C.-in-C. from officers in their commands who had served as adjutants, performed staff duties or shown special administrative aptitude; from these officers the War Office would select a certain number for a month's practical training on some staff; from among those who had served for this month a further selection would then be made of the best for a course of instruction in staff duties lasting five weeks. Recently it has been possible still further to raise the standard for officers appointed to staff duties: the single course of instruction has also been divided into two, a senior course for the higher staff appointments and a junior course for the rest.

The first of the original staff courses started on 22nd April, 1916, and they have been continued ever since. The course, held at one of the universities, was a very abbreviated form of the two years' course at the Staff

College before the war; thus no attempt was made to deal with such a subject as military history. In fact, the object of the course was at first limited to fitting men for subordinate staff posts, while giving them some conception of a divisional staff's duties. Even for this limited object the time was short, and the commandant insisted on very strenuous work from the pupils. Every man was expected to supplement the ordinary lectures and practical exercises, which take up most of the day, by private work at night. Naturally, a good deal of the instruction given at these courses is conveyed in the form of lectures on such matters, amongst others, as:—

Organization of the Army and of the various branches of the staff.
System of supply from base to troops.
The preparation of divisional and brigade orders.
Organization of the various branches of the army, *e. g.* medical services, machine gun corps, flying corps, ordnance services, pay services, etc.
The supply of troops on the march and in action and their comfort in billets.

In addition, more general lectures are given by heads of departments at the War Office or soldiers from the front: typical schemes based on orders drawn up by the students are illustrated in the open.

As in all these schools, the staff of instructors has always been large enough to enable the work of each student to be carefully watched, so that, towards the end of the course, the commandant is able to form a very good idea of each man's capacity and to report

on the work for which he is best suited. Parallel with this course in England there has been a similar staff course in France. The commandant of each of these two miniature Staff Colleges always kept in touch with the work of the other; hence there has been no overlapping and no divergence in the teaching, and a fair supply of staff officers, as well trained as can be expected in time of war, is constantly flowing from both. It is already apparent from results that this new system of combining practical and theoretical training has answered well.[1]

It will be seen from the foregoing account of the instruction and training for officers of the line in Great Britain, that a progressive system of education has been evolved. From the time he leaves the ranks until he is promoted to command his battalion or given a staff appointment, the officer has reasonable opportunities of fitting himself for his duties. For, in addition to the schools for the general duties of officers, there are also institutions for training in such special duties as bombing, musketry, trench mortars,

[1] One of the most important duties of the general staff is to obtain the completest possible intelligence of the enemy's organization, movements and plans. Those who perform this duty must have a very good knowledge of the enemy's language and be adepts at acquiring and then sifting and co-ordinating information from every available source. The work of a good intelligence officer cannot obviously be learned without considerable training and practice. A special class, therefore, was started in June, 1915, for training officers for this work and since then has passed a considerable number to the intelligence branches on various fronts. It is a course which varies in length according to a man's capacity, and of all the courses for the instruction of officers it is the hardest and most strenuous. While officers are passing through it, they have no time to think of anything else, and insensibly become soaked in their subject.

signalling, physical training and anti-gas, to which officers as well as men are periodically attached for courses. It is true that in the stress of war it is impossible to find time for every officer to profit by each of these stages of instruction at home; but, besides these schools in England, there are similar schools in France and at the other theatres of war which officers resting from the trenches can attend.

CHAPTER VIII

THE TRAINING OF N.C.OS.

It has often been said that the non-commissioned officer is the backbone of the British Army, and with regard to the old army the saying is just. The old-fashioned serjeant was a wonderful stand-by in a battalion: he knew all that there is to be known about the drill and the regulations; he had been in the ranks, and, therefore, any influence and authority he had over the men was due far more to his own common sense, tact and knowledge of human nature than to his stripes; at the same time he remained off parade in many respects the equal and companion of the men. But such a man is not formed in a day or even, except in rare instances, in a year. In the New Armies there were, of course, a few of the old breed of non-commissioned officers, and they were invaluable; but their number was almost negligible. Most of the N.C.Os. for the New Armies, therefore, had to be appointed from recruits. In some cases the men chosen had the natural gifts required, and by hard application to their drill and military duties made good N.C.Os.; but more often the new N.C.Os. had not enough knowledge and self-confidence, and consequently lacked the requisite authority for their position. As we have seen in the account of the first year's training of the

New Armies, a constant subject of comment was the weakness of the non-commissioned officers; and it could hardly have been otherwise in view of the want of experience in all ranks. Time, of course, was the principal cure for want of experience, but, failing that, there were still some measures which could be taken to improve their training. These measures were taken as soon as the concentrated training of the first New Armies had been completed and there was time to look round and make good deficiencies.

In July, 1915, a school for training N.C.Os. was opened in one of the commands. It began modestly with a class of 124 N.C.Os., drawn from units in the command, and lasted only three weeks. The first course proving valuable, the classes were continued. But certain difficulties had to be overcome before the courses could be considered an established success. The chief difficulty was to secure the right sort of men for the instruction. The idea was to obtain the best junior N.C.Os. in the units, as those most likely to profit from the training themselves and to be able to communicate it to the other N.C.Os. when they returned to their units. In the dearth of good N.C.Os. some commanding officers were unwilling to spare their best men for a course, which soon extended beyond the original three weeks. But when commanding officers had visited the school, and still more, had seen the good results in the N.C.Os. who had been there, this difficulty soon vanished, and there was no longer any cause to complain of those sent to profit by the instruction. Inspectors of infantry also reported well of the school. Accordingly in February,

1916, the Army Council decided to establish similar schools in every command.

The object of these schools is stated to be "to train and maintain a large reserve of efficient N.C.Os., and, with this object in view, the courses will be attended by

"(*a*) N.C.Os. of and below the rank of corporal;
"(*b*) specially selected recruits whose education and character render them likely to make good N.C.Os."

The length of each course is fixed at two months, but sometimes does not exceed six weeks. Regulations are also made for the rapid promotion, on their return to their units, of those N.C.Os. and privates who pass successfully out of a course. The syllabus is divided into two parts: a practical part, which consists chiefly in drill and musketry practice and methods of training recruits, and a theoretical part, which comprises lectures on the duties of N.C.Os. with regard to discipline, elementary law, sanitation, pay, messing and tactics. There were difficulties in most of the schools at first, owing to want of equipment, insufficiently trained instructors or poor quarters; but these difficulties have been overcome, and, since the schools were founded, the improvement in the efficiency of N.C.Os. in all units of the kingdom has become more and more marked.

The following extracts from a typical report on one of these schools, dated December, 1916, illustrate the growth of this improvement:—

"As regards the N.C.Os. of the first Course of instruction, hardly any had as much as three months'

service, and some as little as three days, but all alike were eager and willing to work and learn all that they could in spite of the adverse conditions then obtaining. Many of the Class were well-educated men, though hardly any were in any sense of the word soldiers.

"The serjt.-instructors of the first course, although generally good at one branch of their work, were, almost without exception, found to be quite ignorant on others, and quite incapable of acting as all-round instructors to their squads. Officers had therefore to be detailed to teach the instructors the work for the following day, and little by little to bring them up to a state of efficiency in all subjects.

"The work was very heavy on all ranks to commence with, and nothing but the greatest zeal and energy from all concerned could have obtained success on the first course.

"The difficulties encountered at the commencement were very considerable. There was no parade ground or facilities for training, with the exception of a miniature range; N.C.Os. had to set to work and cart ashes, and what little gravel there was available, to make a firm foundation to drill on.

"The want of proper equipment was at first very much felt; the serjt.-instructors were without either equipment or rifles, and it was only by degrees that proper educational apparatus could be obtained.

"Stimulus was given to the School when the number of companies was increased. For this type of instruction it seems that the more the cadre can approximate the establishment of a battalion the greater the benefit to those under instruction. A

keener spirit of competition in efficiency is bred and routine duties can better be practised.

"The classes consist of N.C.Os. from all units in the Command, including Works Companies, Naval Division, Cyclists, Yeomanry, Australians and New Zealanders.

"It has been an encouragement that the non-commissioned staff of the School has rapidly and almost exclusively been selected from N.C.Os. who have attended a course of instruction at the School with very satisfactory results.

"Every convenience and facility for training exists. N.C.Os. have constructed their own bayonet fighting and obstacle courses, the miniature range has been greatly improved, life-sized illustrations depicting the attitudes in bayonet fighting have been painted on the wall of the drill shed and also large maps showing the various theatres of war. A sail and shower bath were constructed for use after physical drill in the summer months. The cooks were sent by degrees on courses of instruction until they knew their work, and small improvements were and still are being made to keep the School up-to-date.

"As the results of the School began to make themselves felt, units sent a better and better type of N.C.O., and from these it was found possible to select and retain instructors to teach others the work which they themselves had just been through, and in time nearly all the original instructors were replaced by men who knew their work at least equally well, were more intelligent, and had infinitely more 'drive' and energy.

"One or two serjt.-instructors are sent each course

to the Schools of Instruction at Chelsea and Hayling to keep in touch with the latest ideas at these Schools of Instruction. The information acquired is then passed on to the other serjt.-instructors, and by them to their classes.

"The subjects enumerated in the syllabus are allocated to officers. Each has his own subjects, on which he gives a course of lectures and practical instruction, at which serjt.-instructors attend, so that they are competent to answer questions and help the N.C.Os. of their squads in every subject; this method also ensures that all the ground is covered.

"The great advantage claimed for the School is that N.C.Os. have no fatigues or orderly duties, except for instructional purposes, and are taken away from their ordinary surroundings, so that they are able and willing to devote their whole time and energy to the instruction, without any of the distractions which their life in their units provides. It has been noticed that they are at work either by order or on their own initiative from early morning parade till 'Lights out.'

"A high state of discipline and *esprit de corps* is especially aimed at, and in every branch this is never lost sight of.

"Precision in all, even the smallest detail of drill, is insisted on, as being of the greatest assistance in promoting discipline and thoroughness.

"The physical training is supervised by the gymnastic staff, who keep three most efficient instructors at this School, and each week sent thirteen more certified instructors for a refresher course; these men instruct the N.C.Os. of the School and in their spare

time continue their refresher work. This system has been found to work admirably; and a small gymnastic display for members of the class has been instituted at the end of each course which is much appreciated.

"Special classes were formed in order to allow any N.C.Os. who had a special aptitude for any particular subject to develop it after working hours. These classes were found to be very successful, the majority of the School attended at least one of these classes.

"The note books of the N.C.Os. are carefully attended to, and all information received in notes from the Front or printed pamphlets is summarized and prepared for notes which are dictated by the serjt.-instructors to their squads, as well as any other matter not fully dealt with by the authorized books.

"Cases of absence are very rare, and other offences are practically non-existent at this School.

"The standard of training has greatly improved since last spring, for the improvement in N.C.Os. coming from instruction is most marked; they are far more easily trained, so that each course is carried further and to a higher standard than the last; and further, a large proportion of those who come now for instruction are soldiers with the habit of discipline, and some knowledge of what is expected from them while at the School.

"That part of the Army Council instruction which dealt with the promotion of the N.C.Os. on their return to their units was found to be an excellent innovation in practice. The fact that Commanding Officers promoted N.C.Os. at the first vacancy to the rank for which they were recommended on leaving the School was a great incentive to work, and I have

received no intimation up to the present that any N.C.Os. have been found unfitted for the rank for which they were recommended; on the contrary, many N.C.Os. have been promoted considerably above such rank, and many have even obtained Commissions."

CHAPTER IX

THE TRAINING OF INFANTRY DRAFTS

Since the beginning of 1916 the main work of infantry training has consisted in preparing drafts as reinforcements to units already at the front. It will be remembered [1] that according to the original organization of the New Armies, the supply of drafts was provided for by reserve battalions affiliated either to the old regular battalions or to the newly raised "service" battalions.

In normal circumstances this system of allocating draft-producing battalions to special groups of serving battalions has everything to recommend it, since it maintains the regimental traditions, on which the British Army has always set so much store; at the same time the local associations, to which many of the newly raised battalions owed much of their success, could be preserved. But in a war of this magnitude, with its heavy and unevenly spread toll of casualties, the system was found to have insuperable disadvantages. In the first place the man-power available in different districts varied greatly; consequently, while some reserve battalions had no difficulty in keeping up their strength with recruits obtained in their own area, others found that their

[1] See Chapter V, pp. 70–2.

own district had run dry and could only maintain their strength by recruiting in other districts, thus breaking the Territorial connection. In the second place the demands for reinforcements from the front were as variable as the supply; some battalions, owing to their position in the front line, had very heavy casualties and made such frequent demands for drafts that their reserve battalions could not always supply them with due regard to training; others with slighter casualties made few calls on their reserve battalions. The Military Service Acts of 1916 still further emphasized these difficulties; under these Acts it was impossible to enlist men to the same extent as in the past for particular units or localities; they were called up from every part of the country according to age and on a considered view of the general requirements of the whole Army.

In the autumn of 1916 a new system was introduced. This new system is characteristic of British methods of introducing reforms, since it attempts with success to combine what is of lasting value in an old system with improvements called for by experience. The problem was to obtain a large reservoir from which drafts could on an emergency be sent to any infantry battalion and at the same time interfere as little as possible with the Territorial and regimental traditions, to which so much importance is justly attached. The reservoir was obtained by the constitution of a new corps of infantry, designated "*The Training Reserve.*" This reservoir was formed by pooling most of the former reserve battalions, *i. e.* all the reserve battalions for the "Service" and locally raised units of the New Armies, called respectively

2nd Reserve and *Local Reserve* Battalions, and by diversion of new recruits to this Training Reserve. At the same time the regimental reserves were not entirely abolished. Each Regular regiment retains its old Special Reserve Battalion and Extra Special Reserve Battalion, if any; these are the old Militia battalions with a history, in some cases, even more ancient than that of the Regular battalions, so that in any case it would have been a strong measure to abolish them. With regard to the Territorials, the third-line battalions were converted into reserve battalions. In some cases each third-line battalion simply becomes a reserve battalion by itself; in others two or more third-line battalions are combined to form one reserve battalion. For example, most of the third-line battalions of the London Regiment (T.F.) are retained as reserve battalions, while in some other counties, where the recruiting has not been so good, as many as six third-line battalions are combined to make one of the new reserve battalions. When the new system was inaugurated in the autumn of 1916, these regimental reserve and Territorial reserve battalions were brought up to full establishment by drafting into them men from the 2nd Reserve, Local Reserve and Territorial reserve battalions, that were to be abolished as separate units. Any surplus men left in these last battalions were transferred to the new Training Reserve battalions. The regimental and Territorial reserve battalions are now kept up to strength, partly by men belonging to the regiment, who have been invalided from the front on discharge from hospital,[1] partly by recruits from the regimental

[1] If the reserve battalion is full these discharged invalids are

recruiting area. The supply for the training reserve brigades is kept up by recruits drawn from the whole area of the command to which the brigades may be affiliated.

When a battalion at the front is in need of drafts the first call is made on the regimental or Territorial Force reserve battalion. If this battalion has not enough fully-trained men for drafting, the deficiency is made up with drafts taken from the fully-trained men in one of the training reserve brigades in the same command. As long as a man is under training in the training reserve corps he has no regimental status,[1] but as soon as he is posted as a draft to a battalion at the front he becomes a member of that regiment.

By this system the difficulty is overcome of meeting a sudden call for a large number of drafts at the front without resorting to the unpopular device of transferring men from one regiment to another. At the same time there is always a reservoir of fully-trained men for drafting, from which any deficiencies in the regimental reserves can be made good.

The training given to recruits both in the regimental reserve battalions and the training reserve battalions is the same. Naturally this training must differ in some respects from that given in the first instance to the New Armies. There the recruits all joined at approximately the same time, and so in any given unit were at the same stage of training; and the object

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temporarily attached to a training reserve brigade in the command, but retain their regimental status.

[1] Except in the above-mentioned case of returned E.F. men temporarily attached to the training reserve.

of the training was to fit each unit, company, battalion, brigade, or division to go out to the fighting line as a homogeneous whole. Thus, although the training of each individual was important, since one or two badly-trained men can neutralize the good training of many more men, this individual training was in a sense overshadowed by the organized training of great masses of men. In a draft-producing unit, on the other hand, the training of the individual recruit is the main problem. Of course, the recruit in a training battalion must learn his company drill and, if he has time, pick up some battalion drill; but he never goes out to the front with the battalion in which he has had his training, and, even if he goes out in a draft equal in numbers to a company, such a company is almost certain to be split up and distributed through the battalion to which he is sent. This characteristic of draft-finding units in itself makes the training more difficult, for one of the most powerful incentives to good work is the feeling of solidarity in a regiment and the consciousness of each man that he and his fellows will be comrades in the field as well as on the parade ground, and that success depends on the united efforts of every individual. This difficulty is accentuated by the fact that in every draft-producing battalion, as drafts go out, recruits are constantly coming in at irregular intervals, so that the men in such a battalion must necessarily be at varying stages of proficiency. Thus a proper battalion drill is almost impossible with such a unit, as the new recruits are not up to the work; and for the same reason even company drill is not always easy. These are difficulties which are inseparable from the training of

drafts. They have been partly overcome by the system of linked battalions, whereby recruits for drafting can learn the *esprit de corps* of the regiment, even if that of the battalion is lacking; while the training reserve battalions, though they have no direct regimental connection, are in practice generally used to provide drafts for a certain definite number of regiments.

Organization of the training is another method by which some of these difficulties can to a certain extent be overcome; it is indeed obvious that a very carefully thought out organization is needed, if no man is to waste his time. When recruits have necessarily only a limited period before they are sent to the front, if the recruit in his sixth week is being trained alongside the recruit in his second or third week, both will be wasting their time; either the more experienced man will be kept back or the raw recruit will be learning to run before he can walk. Reserve battalion commanders have thought out various methods of organization to meet this difficulty, and, as long as the results they show in turning out efficient drafts are satisfactory, they are allowed to use their own methods. For the British Army in the main has always encouraged—and at no time more than during this war—originality and the development of new ideas. The War Office recognized that circumstances cannot always be moulded into the same form, and that one good man may work best in one way, while another does equally good work by a quite different method. For that reason the War Office confined its guidance to offering a choice of several methods of organization, which from experience have been

found satisfactory. One method, for example, is to organize the battalion into recruits companies, training companies and unfit companies, the men being moved into companies under these categories according to their state of proficiency. Another method is to have a draft-finding platoon in each company, the men being moved up from platoon to platoon in the company until they finally reach the draft-finding platoon. A third is to have the companies graded, the recruit joining the bottom company of the ladder, and this company gradually working its way to the top and becoming the draft-finding company. Yet another method is to neglect the platoon and company organization altogether, as far as training is concerned,[1] and to keep together all the men in the battalion of a given week's stage of training; in this way the men of the second week's training are all working at the same programme, those of the third at another more advanced, and so on, and there is no danger of any man missing any part of the syllabus of instruction laid down.

The actual syllabus of instruction for recruits in a draft-finding unit and the time devoted to it have necessarily changed in accordance with the changing needs of the war. To take the question of time. At first it was thought that three months was the least period into which the training necessary for recruits could be completed; about the middle of 1915, however, the ever-increasing demand for drafts necessitated curtailing the time required to train men, and the whole programme of training at home was fitted

[1] For administrative purposes, of course, the platoon and company organization is still important.

into ten weeks. A year later it was again found possible to extend the time for training. The length of time allowed is not at all excessive, when it is considered that for the first two weeks the work has to be very light. For during that fortnight the recruit has to be clothed, and also to be vaccinated and inoculated, so that he cannot be very fit for active duties for several days during that fortnight. The whole of the period is not necessarily spent at home; often the training given at home does not exceed nine weeks, the remaining training being given to the recruit at a base in France, where he can become more familiarized with the actual conditions of trench warfare. Even those men sent out on drafts, who have had their full training in England, are always given some time at the base in France to go through supplementary instruction in certain special subjects of importance best learned out there.

The changes that have been made in the syllabus since the beginning of the war give an interesting indication of the changes in the methods of warfare and also incidentally of the improved facilities for training at home. The syllabus of 1914 was based entirely on the old infantry training, the only subjects of instruction being:—

Squad drill, with and without arms.
Platoon drill.
Physical drill.
Musketry (96 hours).
Extended order drill (about 80 hours).
Outposts and night duty.
Route marching.
Entrenching (only 15 hours in the whole period).

Bayonet fighting (only 9 hours in the whole period).

The syllabus of June, 1915, shows a great change not only in the list of subjects of instruction, but, still more remarkably, in the proportion of time given to some of the old subjects. Musketry, for example, has 152 hours instead of 96. Bayonet fighting begins in the fourth week instead of the ninth and gets 30 hours instead of only 9. The time given to entrenching is increased; the use of bombs and of wire entanglements is recognized to the extent of six hours being allowed for instruction therein; and some idea of cooking in the field is given. On the other hand, extended order drill is reduced from 80 hours to 3, and outpost drill is not specifically mentioned.

The syllabus of May, 1916, shows another step forward. The period being extended, a better progression of instruction became possible. For the first time account could be taken of the weakness of human nature, in making the first fortnight of the recruit's initiation into the Army comparatively light, the aim during that fortnight being "gradually to accustom the recruit to military training in order that he may be able to undertake the work laid down in the syllabus without undue strain. Physical training, drill, etc., should not last more than half an hour at a time, with lectures in between." Besides the advantage of more thorough instruction in all subjects, owing to the extension of time, a few changes significant of the lessons in fighting learned at the front were introduced into the curriculum. Bayonet fighting, the value of which had been proved in every

assault and trench raid, got more time. Bombing, instead of getting only a portion of a six hours' period during the whole course, as in 1915, was allotted a position in the curriculum more commensurate with its importance in trench warfare. For the last five weeks of the course a portion of the thirty hours given to physical training was to be spent on throwing dummy bombs, and in addition eighteen hours were to be devoted to instruction and practice with live bombs. Anti-gas measures, which had been slightly mentioned in 1915, and entrenching, entanglements and cooking in the field obtained more recognition; while extended order drill, which had been crowded out from the shorter course of the previous year, as it was not of immediate use in the trenches, was restored to the curriculum, no doubt as a reminder to the recruit that trench warfare was not the only form of fighting he might be called upon to undertake.

Finally, the syllabus of October, 1916, introduced further improvements in training, suggested by the lessons of the early fighting on the Somme. The three most marked changes are in respect to bayonet fighting, bombing and anti-gas instruction. Lectures on bombing and anti-gas measures are for the first time to be given to recruits in their first fortnight; throughout the remainder of the course an hour a week is to be devoted to anti-gas measures; and physical exercises suitable to bombing are introduced from the start, while the time devoted to throwing dummy and live bombs is considerably augmented. In the same way from the third week onwards there is continuous training in bayonet fighting, at first for three hours and after the fifth week for six hours every week.

Time is found for this additional training partly by adding another hour to the weekly hours of training, partly by slightly reducing the time given to other items in the curriculum.

In addition to the training of normal recruits, it has been found necessary within the last year to make special provision for men of peculiar categories. One of these consists of men discharged from hospital as fit for return to duty, technically known as A3 men. For them a carefully graduated course is laid down to harden them by slow degrees to resume the life for which wounds or sickness had temporarily disabled them. In their first week, for example, they are only expected to march in light order for a mile in the morning and a mile in the afternoon, and so on until by gradually ascending stages they are able to do their full duty in the fourth or fifth week. Special games and special forms of physical training are also laid down for them. By such methods the inevitable slackness due to illness and hospital is dispelled by easy stages, and the men as a rule become as hard as they were before. The other special category is of A4 men, those who enter the army between the ages of eighteen and eighteen years and eight months. For them, instead of fourteen weeks a six months' course is laid down. They learn the same as the ordinary recruit, but are able to learn it more thoroughly during the longer period. The results of this six months' training for young soldiers have been excellent, and some of the smartest soldiers sent out to the front are found among them.

It will thus be obvious that the administration as well as the training of a draft-producing unit presents

special difficulties, which can only be overcome by an excellent system and a great deal of hard work in the battalion and company orderly rooms. The irregular arrival of recruits and the constant changes in personnel complicate the work exceedingly. For example, all returned E.F. men who are temporarily attached to a training reserve battalion are still paid by the reserve battalion of their own regiment. Drafts, too, are generally called for at very short notice, and, before they are sent off, have to be completely clothed and fitted out, their records made up and despatched and their pay-sheets brought up to date. These difficulties are not lightened by the fact that, owing to the exigencies of war, the company and other officers in reserve battalions are constantly changing. Invalided officers fit for home duty are temporarily attached, but, when fit for general service, are liable to be sent back to the front. Naturally there is a nucleus of officers and orderly room serjeants, whose passage is not so transitory, but for that reason all the more depends on their power of organization and hard work.

A discussion on the value of the training given to recruits in technical matters, such as musketry, bombing, etc., may most conveniently be left to the sections dealing with the specialist schools devoted to these subjects. A few general considerations, however, on the value of the general training given find a place here.

Those who have watched the recruits as they come in to be trained, and have followed them through their course of instruction, have all been struck by the marvellous improvement in smartness and physique

which they gain after only a few weeks' instruction. This is to a very large extent attributable to the system of physical training which is given in the British army. Carefully graduated, and designed to develop the moral and intellectual faculties no less than the physical, it is based on the Swedish system of drill, and is being constantly modified as the result of experience.[1] This improvement is no doubt also due partly to the well-ordered and disciplined life, the regular hours, and the open-air work. To men accustomed to spend all their days in a factory or on a clerk's stool, the change of life is for the time being, at any rate, an unqualified benefit. Many lads, whose sole idea of outdoor amusement was to form part of a football crowd on a Saturday afternoon will, no doubt, after their experience of military training, insist hereafter on playing football themselves or tramping through the countryside instead of merely watching others play. If their military training effects this they will have indeed cause to be grateful for it.

Our military training also encourages self-respect. One of the points chiefly noted by foreign observers about the men belonging to the original expeditionary force was their clean and alert appearance and their look of self-confidence. The later armies as they went out and the drafts that are continually reinforcing them have in their turn helped to keep up this reputation. This is largely due to the importance attached in the British Army to the clean appearance of person, uniform and accoutrements—the spit and polish idea as it is sometimes called—and to the stress laid on

[1] A fuller account of this system is given below pp. 141 *sqq.*

the observance of correct salutes and other apparently trivial ceremonies. The attention paid to these matters is certainly not wasted, either morally or physically. The Duke of Wellington used to say: "Show me the way the guard is mounted in a regiment, and I will tell you how that regiment will behave in the field"; and there is as much truth in this rough rule now as in the old Duke's days. A man who salutes punctiliously gives a good impression of the regiment or corps to which he belongs, and shows that he himself has the alertness and sense of discipline, without which no man can be depended upon either in the trenches or in the open. There was a period since the war began when the duty of saluting was not so punctiliously observed as it is now. For various reasons, chief of which was the difficulty at one time of obtaining a sufficient staff of experienced instructors, one or two corps were almost notorious for their slackness in this respect. But now, thanks to the more general facilities for training and the pervasive influence of certain central schools of instruction, there are no such exceptions; it is impossible to make a distinction between one regiment or corps or another since all are equally punctilious in this duty. This improvement is noticeable in many other particulars. It was not that the earlier-trained soldiers were badly trained; but it is only natural with the greater experience that has come from dealing with huge numbers of recruits and the constantly improving organization that the later recruits should be more rapidly and efficiently brought up to a high standard. Nothing, perhaps, illustrates so well the high moral of the nation and its determination to win as this

gradually improving standard of military education; had we come down to the dregs of the population or had our self-confidence been sapped, no amount of organization, and no amount of scientific training would turn out soldiers of so soldierly and proud an appearance as those that are constantly flowing from the reserve battalions to France and the other seats of war.

CHAPTER X

SPECIAL SCHOOLS OF INSTRUCTION

(1) *Physical and Bayonet Training*

In improvising new armies of such magnitude as ours during the last two years and a half, the maintenance of uniform standards of instruction has not been an easy matter. Individuality of method has its advantages in introducing improvements both in matter and manner of training and, as we have seen in the previous pages, the British Army has not been slow in taking up new ideas and encouraging individual efforts at progress. But in training an army the practical use of such individual efforts is only obtained when their results are recognized to be of sufficient value to be incorporated in the old system. Isolated efforts, if they never influence the whole scheme of training, are actually harmful, however valuable they may be intrinsically. To take a somewhat obvious instance: suppose some commanding officer invented a much simpler and better method of forming fours than the one found in the drill book, unless that new method were adopted universally in the army its merits would not outweigh the ill effects of its partial adoption; one can imagine the confusion that would result if various infantry regiments had different ways of forming fours or performing any other simple manœuvre.

In the early days of training, the maintenance of

uniform standards was made more difficult by the scarcity of experienced instructors formed under the old system. The training had to be carried on in different centres, often by men who had not been themselves trained according to the most recent methods, and the system of co-ordination of training could not be carried out with the success which ampler means have since made possible. Before the war there was one uniform system of musketry training, which radiated from Hythe, another of physical training from the headquarter gymnasium at Aldershot; there was a cookery centre to which regimental cooks were sent to learn their business, and so on. But with the outbreak of war the staffs of these institutions were dispersed and their standardizing work was temporarily in abeyance. However, after the first inevitable confusion, the threads of the old system were gradually picked up again, institutions for standardizing musketry, physical training and cookery were re-constituted, though not always in the same form as before. New institutions also were established for securing uniformity of training in subjects such as bombing, trench-mortars, etc., the importance of which had only been realized as the war progressed. In this and the following two chapters an account will be given of some of the institutions, of which the main object is to train instructors in different branches of Army training, and fit them for the duty of maintaining the uniform standard needed to make the army effective as one organic whole.

In Prince Kraft zu Hohenlohe's *Letters on Infantry* there is an illuminating passage on the value of

physical training. He had observed that the recruits of the Alexander Regiment of Guards never appeared for drill in the barrack square during their first fortnight. The Prince asked one of their captains the reason for this, and was told enigmatically that no man was allowed to drill unless he could drill. In answer to further questions the captain "explained to me that every man of the lower classes uses only one set of muscles in his ordinary work; the shoemaker uses one set, the tailor another, the woodcutter another, and the agricultural labourer another; the muscles which are least used tend to grow feeble from disuse, and this is why newly joined recruits (in nine cases out of ten) find it hard, and almost impossible, either to stand or walk straight. They may be compelled to do so, but not without pain, which not infrequently increases into cramp of the muscles, and this, in combination with all the new and unaccustomed things which the recruit finds in his new position, in combination also with home-sickness, leads to despondency and, not rarely, to insubordination, crime, and even suicide. For this reason it has become a tradition in the infantry of the Guard to instruct the recruits first of all in every kind of gymnastic exercises, which are carried on in canvas suits in the barrack room, and which advance very gradually and without effort from the easy to the more difficult, until they at length have command over all their muscles. Since these exercises are tiring, they are not carried on for long together, but are varied by instruction as to their new life by showing them their arms, etc., and especially by encouraging them to ask questions, and awakening their curiosity in order that

they may gain confidence in their new position and in their superiors. The results of these exercises are soon evident in the development of the neglected muscles, which shows itself by a natural and more upright bearing and by a regular step. When this result has been obtained, they then for the first time receive their uniform, which the tailor has been fitting in the meanwhile, and commence their drill. Each man is, according to his progress, posted from time to time to the drill-squad."

The importance of such muscle-developing exercises had, of course, long been recognized in the British Army, but it was only within a comparatively recent period that a system of physical training on exact scientific principles has been adopted. During the period of military reorganization which followed the South African War the system of physical training for the Army was entirely revolutionized. The Navy had already given a lead in 1905 by adopting a new system based on Ling's Swedish methods, and two years later the Army followed suit. After careful study and a series of experiments at the Army headquarter gymnasium during 1906 a new manual of physical training was brought out in 1907. This manual was based on the Swedish system with modifications, prompted by these experiments.

From the date of its issue the system of the manual was used for the physical training of all units of the British Army. Its value was very soon recognized, not only for the improvement it visibly produced in the physique and mental alertness of the men, but also for the added interest which it gave them in their work in the gymnasium.

The system then adopted is carefully designed to produce a state of health, general physical fitness, and increased mental activity by the "harmonious development of the *whole*—the skeleton or framework, the internal organs (including the brain and nerves), and the muscular system." The exercises laid down for the training are so arranged that the required results can only be attained by the sum total of *all* the exercises employed, and in constructing the manual very great care was taken that with every lesson exercises should be given for every part of the body, as well as for co-ordination, and that they should be progressive according to the capacity of the individuals under training. The scheme of each lesson is so planned that "the exercises should be easy at the commencement and gradually increasing in strength and vigour towards the latter part, then decreasing in strength at the end, so that the circulation, which has been considerably accelerated by the stronger exercises, is sufficiently restored to its more normal state to enable the pupil to proceed to his other work without any feeling of undue agitation or fatigue." Points insisted on for instructors are that they should not only themselves understand the physiological reasons for each exercise, but help all the individuals of their class to understand the object and value of the training; that the teaching should not be of a wooden uniformity, but take account of the different characters, temperaments and capabilities of the men, that interest in the work should be aroused by variety of exercises and occasional relaxation, and that all impatient, bullying and discouraging methods of handling a class should be avoided.

The success of such a system depends almost entirely on the competence of the instructors to whom the physical training of the units is entrusted. The one centre from which emanates the physical training throughout the British Army is the headquarter gymnasium at Aldershot. Here are the experts who supervise and instruct the officers and N.C.Os. who are distributed throughout the Commands at home and abroad, British Armies in the field, and the training camps in the Colonies.

Before the war the infantry recruits' course of physical training consisted of 110 attendances of one hour at the gymnasium. The physical training in the different Commands was supervised by a superintendent of gymnasia and conducted by staff instructors, all of whom, together with the inspection and training staff at Aldershot, formed the Army Gymnastic Staff. The training given to instructors at Aldershot before the war was considerably longer than is now possible. After a preliminary course of six weeks, held in a gymnasium in the Command, a candidate for the post of instructor attended a four months' course (for the cavalry six months) at the headquarter gymnasium at Aldershot. This course included the theory and practice of physical training, anatomy, physiology, instruction in bayonet fighting. The candidates were also encouraged to qualify in extra subjects such as swimming, gymnastics, boxing. At the end of the course those qualified obtained a physical training certificate, but they required a further three months' experience in the instruction of recruits before they could have their certificates endorsed with the full qualification of instructor.

At the outbreak of war the whole of the Army Gymnastic Staff, with the exception of fifteen instructors employed at Woolwich and Sandhurst, rejoined their regiments, thus leaving no one to carry on the system of physical training for the New Armies. Within three weeks, however, the War Office gave instructions for the assembling of a new staff and the organization of physical training in the new armies. The late Assistant Inspector of Gymnasia was entrusted with this work and promoted to the position of Inspector of Gymnasia (now called Inspector of Physical and Bayonet Training). He set to work to such purpose that by the 1st September he had collected some eighty N.C.O. instructors at Aldershot, partly by re-enlisting discharged Army Gymnastic Staff instructors, partly by borrowing the services of O.T.C. serjt.-instructors from schools and colleges. The Inspector of Gymnasia had two problems before him to be solved with the assistance of this hastily collected staff: (1) to adapt the system of physical training to the altered circumstances, (2) to train a sufficient staff of instructors and assistant instructors to ensure that the instruction of the units should be efficient.

In preparing the new tables of physical training exercises the chief considerations were the much shorter time available before recruits would be needed for active service, the scarcity of equipment, and that training would be carried out in camps instead of in gymnasia.

The peace-time tables for recruits were calculated to be spread over 110 hours; the time laid down for the physical training of the recruits' course for the

New Armies was scarcely more than half that period. Again, the peace-time course involved the use of a certain amount of equipment, such as wall-bars, balancing beams, vaulting horses, climbing ropes; with the sudden and enormous increase of the Army a sufficient supply of highly trained instructors, of apparatus or of gymnasia was entirely out of the question. Lastly, however rapidly the new instructors could be trained it would be a considerable time before there could be enough to impart efficient instruction in any but simple exercises to the necessarily large classes of recruits, many of whom had come from sedentary occupations.

Accordingly it was necessary to shorten and simplify the course of training. Fortunately the Inspector of Gymnasia and his assistants at Aldershot were men who had not only studied the objects and methods of physical training from a scientific standpoint, but after years of practical experience were enthusiasts as to its value. Such men found it easy to pick out the essentials of the system, to graduate a modified course in the best way, and to make the explanations so simple that even an untrained man could follow them. Revised tables of exercises were at once compiled and issued; these required no equipment, were scientifically progressive, and, when they appeared in pamphlet form, were so simply explained, both by letterpress and by diagrams that it is easy for any intelligent N.C.O. to learn them.

A new method of bayonet fighting instruction was also introduced at the headquarter gymnasium and issued to all units in October, 1914. The elaborate bayonet fighting equipment—spring muskets, masks

and padded jackets—being unobtainable in sufficient quantities, long sticks, and sacks stuffed with straw and turf suspended from rough gallows to represent the "enemy" were substituted, and the men were trained on these with their service rifles and bayonets, which they would use in battle. Here again the note of simplicity was struck, and the training adapted to the existing conditions. Before the war bayonet training had been supervised by the company commander, but early in 1915 the importance of bayonet fighting in this war and the need of thoroughly efficient instruction became recognized, and the Army Gymnastic Staff was made responsible for this training also, and has expanded and perfected the 1914 method.

The second problem, to train an adequate supply of instructors, was more difficult. In the first place, seventy of the eighty staff instructors collected at Aldershot by the 1st September, after a short refresher course, were sent out to as many battalions of the first New Army to start the physical training. The remaining ten were kept as a training staff at Aldershot. The first batch to be trained arrived on the 10th September; it consisted of 180 N.C.Os. from the first and second New Armies. At first they did not seem promising; they were practically raw recruits, the majority of them without uniforms, and even without regimental numbers. The conditions under which they had to be trained were hardly more favourable. The Aldershot Command was so overcrowded with units that no accommodation or messing could be arranged for N.C.Os. attending the course, and they had to bed down as best they could in the

gymnasium itself, while arrangements were made at the canteen for messing them on the ration allowance. Another difficulty was the need for a drastic curtailment of the course; hundreds of battalions of the New Armies were waiting for instruction in physical training, and if they had to wait while their instructors went through the old four months' course most of them would have reached France before their instructors had come to them. Fortunately the men proved remarkably keen and intelligent in spite of their rawness as soldiers; the discomforts of accommodation were accepted with good will and were gradually remedied, and by the modification of the physical training tables the course of training was capable of large curtailment.

At first it was intended to give a full month's course, but owing to the standard of intelligence and keenness of this first batch of N.C.Os. it was reduced to twenty-one working days. In this short period it is found possible to give a sufficient grounding in methods of instruction to fit the N.C.Os. to take positions as assistant instructors in their units under an Army gymnastic staff instructor. Naturally the classes cannot now go so much into the theory of the subject as was the case before the war, and they leave out all exercises requiring apparatus. But they acquire enough of the Army system of instruction in physical and bayonet training to be able to impart it intelligently and effectively, and become really efficient instructors with further experience.

Since the first 180 came in September, 1914, the courses of instruction at Aldershot have gone on continuously except for the very short breaks necessary

to give some rest to the Army School staff instructors. On the completion of this course each N.C.O. attending it receives a physical and bayonet training certificate marked with the quality of his attainments. They return to their units as assistant instructors, and as soon as they can satisfy the superintendent of physical and bayonet training in the command of their efficiency their certificates are endorsed as qualified to be instructors and they are entitled to extra pay. The number in each course was soon after the commencement raised to 500, in order to meet the growing demand for assistant instructors. Officers also undergo the twenty-one working days' course and can obtain certificates which qualify them to supervise the physical and bayonet training in their units.

Since the middle of 1916 command schools of physical and bayonet training have been established. Here preliminary instruction is given to officers and N.C.Os. before going to Aldershot, as well as refresher courses for those already passed as staff or assistant instructors. Each year over 6,000 officers and N.C.Os. qualify for their certificates in the Army School at Aldershot and its branch at Portsmouth; whereas before the war an average of only 360 N.C.Os. went through the Aldershot course annually.

Most of these remain assistant instructors, but the best are being constantly taken to reinforce the Army Gymnastic Staff, which is under the command of the inspector of physical and bayonet training. Before the war this staff, excluding clerks, numbered 172; to-day its total reaches 1,663. To the Army Gymnastic Staff belong the assistant inspectors, the superintendents and assistant superintendents of physical

and bayonet training, who supervise these trainings in the Army School, the commands at home and with the British Armies in France; the staff serjeants of different ranks conduct the trainings of formations and units at home and abroad.

The enormous increase in the numbers and duties of the Army Gymnastic Staff may be illustrated in another way by the following comparison of the peace and war establishments in two commands [1]:—

——	Assist. Inspector of Gymnasia.	Supts. of Gymnasia.	Assist. Supts. of Gymnasia.	A. G. S. Instructors.	Stations to be visited.	Units to be inspected.	Training undertaken.
—— Command—							
Peace	—	1	—	15	13	40	Physical.
War	—	1	3	154	80	160	Physical and bayonet.
—— Command—							
Peace	—	1	2	28	25	50	Physical.
War	1	2	4	230	120	310	Physical and bayonet.

How far has this staff justified its existence? The training for which it is responsible now forms approximately one-fourth of the whole training of the infantry soldier, and physical training is in demand in every branch of the service. Or perhaps this question can best be answered by any one who has watched for a few weeks the progress of a set of recruits drafted to a training battalion. When they arrive they vary, of course, immensely in appearance; some are lusty and

[1] This table was drawn up in August, 1916. Since then there has been a further increase in the war establishment.

vigorous, but a great many are pale and narrow-chested, and do not know how to walk or to hold up their heads—are slow to think and slow to move. From the start they are taken in hand by the physical training instructors and given easy exercises in marching and the development of their muscles. At the outset the idea of physical exercise as a drill is boring and intolerable to many of the recruits, but as they go on they find it becoming more and more interesting and even amusing, while at the end of each exercise they have a new feeling of physical and mental alertness. It is not all "drill"; the exercises are very short and of great variety, and are performed under the strictest discipline, but occasionally games or running matches, which stimulate competition and laughter, are introduced. Then suddenly comes the instructor's sharp whistle, and all soon learn to assemble at the double and sort themselves rapidly into their ranks. After two or three weeks of this process, which only lasts one hour a day, the change in the men's appearance is marvellous. They have learned to march with a swing, heads held up proudly and chests forward they already look and are brighter and keener and feel joy in their bodies.

The bayonet training is undertaken by the same instructors. Then the men begin to feel the value of their strengthened muscles and greater quickness of movement, and also soon realize that they are learning an art on which their own lives and the destruction of the enemy may depend. The fighting spirit which lies dormant in most men of our race is awakened and stimulated by this training. For this reason it has been taken up by units not armed with the

bayonet and by some who fight in our latest monsters of destruction.

Few who have seen this training, none who have experienced it, can fail to appreciate it. Our comrades from the Dominions were ignorant of the system when they first came over; their experience of its value has been so satisfactory that now instructors from the Army Gymnastic Staff are supervising the physical and bayonet training in Canada, and the Australians and New Zealanders in England adopt it enthusiastically.

Moreover, since February, 1916, the system has pursued the British soldier to France. At first the men were inclined to grumble when they came out of the trenches at finding the physical and bayonet expert awaiting them; but the officer who inaugurated the system in France knew what he was about and was crafty in his methods. "We had to lead the men on gradually," he tells you, "so, as soon as they left the trenches, we took care that they should find football grounds and footballs and a skilled staff of instructors, who understood the art of combining invigorating physical exercises with recreation. At first the men rather shied at the physical training during their short periods of rest; but now the training has become so popular that they would be disappointed if they did not get it." They found, too, that their trench stiffness disappeared much more quickly after these exercises, and they recognized the sound principles of the method. They practised at it as they practised at their games, and went over the top full of confidence in their superiority over the German "team." This confidence and the increased

fighting spirit obtained by bayonet training have markedly strengthened their moral.

The physical training is not merely suited to the normal man. The system has been so scientifically elaborated that special exercises are laid down for the remedy of small ailments to which men are liable after being in cramped and damp trenches, where little exercise is possible. Other tables of exercises have been made for more serious cases of convalescents from hospitals or permanently disabled men, and since the war members of the Army Gymnastic Staff have been employed in training such men to regain the use of their limbs or to build up anew an impaired constitution.

It is claimed, and it can hardly be doubted, that the course at the Headquarters Gymnasium enhances the value of a N.C.O. by fifty per cent., owing to his increased mental and physical activity and the self-confidence he gains from the "communicating drill." The staff instructors there are all picked men, the discipline is rigid, and the "form" of the establishment, the growth of years, has been well maintained by the nucleus of pre-mobilization staff instructors, who were the pick of the N.C.Os. of the British Army. The Headquarter Gymnasium has had a great opportunity in this war through its all-pervading influence on the whole British Army, which now means the majority of the active men of the kingdom. The ambition of those who conduct it is that their instruction may have had a permanent influence for good on the physique and moral of the British nation.

CHAPTER XI

SPECIAL SCHOOLS OF INSTRUCTION

(2) *Drill*

"THE drill book," as the late Colonel Henderson wrote in one of his essays, "does not pretend to be an exhaustive tactical treatise. . . . It should be thoroughly understood, then, that the drill book was never intended to be the sole guide to the training of the troops for war." This salutary reminder is useful both to those who abuse barrack square drill and to those who unduly exalt it. It is essentially a means to an end though not an end in itself, and this fact cannot be put better than in the restrained description of the official *Infantry Training:* "Drill in close order is of first importance in producing discipline, cohesion and the habits of absolute and instant obedience to the orders of a superior." The untutored civilian, especially if he has lived a free life of adventure in outlying parts of the Empire, is sometimes inclined to question the value of forming fours, marching in step and dressing the line exactly, and to ask what is the good of such exercises as a training for the trenches, or, indeed, any other kind of warfare. That is because he does not fully realize the aim of drill, which is to turn a crowd of men from a mere mob to an organized body that can be

depended on in any circumstances to carry out orders instinctively.

Troops that have acquired a habit of obedience by constant and minute attention to the detail of close order drill can be handled with ease in circumstances which would turn badly-trained men into a flock of sheep. It is probably the case that a smart performance of drill movements on the parade ground is in some respects harder than the execution of any order that may be given to a soldier on active service; it requires, for example, more exact care and thought to carry out an order like, "At the halt, facing left, form column of platoons," than to charge out of the trenches in the excitement of battle. Nor, indeed, is it true, even to-day, that the actual practice of drill movements is never needed on the battlefield. We all know what the men who stood firm in the squares at Waterloo owed to drill methods; a more recent instance of the present war is less well known. At the battle of Loos, when one of the brigades of Guards was advancing in platoons in artillery formation, a shrapnel shell laid out fifty per cent. of one of the platoons. In a moment order appeared from chaos. The survivors of the platoon fell in, two deep, under heavy shell fire, and the lines were dressed and numbered. They then formed fours, formed two deep, were turned about and again formed fours. On being turned to the front once more, they received the command, "Advance in fours from the right; form fours, right, left wheel, quick march." Every movement was carried out as on the Chelsea parade ground, under the delighted eyes of some London Territorials, who two days previously had broken the first system

of German defence. These Territorials themselves had gone forward under shell fire and a hail of machine-gun bullets with their own lines dressed as on parade, and were proud of having done so, but they willingly yielded the palm to the Guards. To every one who saw the movements of the Guards that day the practical value of close order drill was convincingly shown. Nevertheless, it may be admitted that such instances are rare in modern warfare. But even if they never occurred the value of barrack square drill would be none the less. The man who knows at once what to do when he and his comrades are ordered to form column, and does it, has gone a long way towards mastering the lessons that a soldier is no good if he does not act in unison with other soldiers (*cohesion*), and that a soldier who cannot be depended upon to carry out an order unhesitatingly and intelligently (*discipline* and *obedience*) is more hindrance than advantage to his side.

The ideas of cohesion, discipline and obedience depend, especially in the early stages of the recruit's training, more on good close order drill than on anything. To be effective this drill must be smart, minutely exact and treated for the time being as the most serious thing in life. It should also be uniform; that is to say, that, while very small differences of detail such as exist between the rifle regiments and the line regiments may be allowed as a concession to regimental traditions, in its main lines it should be the same throughout the British Army. Otherwise the sense of cohesion and of *esprit d'armée* would be at once lost; for the confusion would be hopeless if there were no standard of drill-practice. It is espe-

cially important at a time when recruits have to be trained as rapidly as possible and when, after the recruit stage has been passed, the opportunities for drill are comparatively limited, that this standard of drill should be the highest attainable. Now, it is no derogation to all the other gallant regiments in the British Army to say that the Guards have a tradition of peculiar smartness and exactness in their drill. To the Guards, therefore, was allotted the duty of setting the standard for drill throughout the New Armies.

For many years before the war the London District School of Instruction at the Chelsea Guards' Barracks had been charged with the training of officers and N.C.Os. of the London Territorial Force. In August, 1914, this work ceased and the staff of the school rejoined their units. Soon, however, the need of means for standardizing the instruction in drill became apparent. The enormous majority of officers in the New Armies were almost untrained, the number of old Regular drill-serjeants was too limited to allow even of one to a battalion, and there was the gravest danger that slipshod and even erroneous methods of drill might be introduced into the training of recruits. To meet this difficulty a similar policy was adopted for drill as for physical training. At the end of September, 1914, the School of Instruction in drill was reconstituted at Chelsea Barracks. At first the course was confined to re-enlisted N.C.Os. and men of the Brigade of Guards. Of these 231 altogether were trained here to go out as instructors to the New Armies. They were sent out, as a rule, in parties of four, and were moved on from battalion to battalion to establish the drill on the right lines.

As far as they went, these Guards instructors proved very valuable, but the supply of them was too limited to meet the needs of every unit. Accordingly, on October 1st, 1915, a more elastic system was introduced. It was decided to form a permanent instructional staff at Chelsea chosen from the Guards, and to get officers and N.C.Os. from all the commands sent to the school to be trained, and then act as instructors on their return to their units. As the work of the School was essentially that of training future instructors how to teach others, it was necessary that candidates from the units should hold positions giving them adequate authority and opportunities of training others when they rejoined. Orders accordingly were issued that in selecting candidates preference should be given to adjutants or officers likely to become adjutants and to regimental and company serjeant-majors. At first the courses lasted a fortnight, and were later extended to three weeks, and at the same time the staff of the School was enlarged to suffice for a normal allotment to each course of 410 vacancies, of which 135 are for officers. Each command in the United Kingdom is entitled to recommend to a certain number of these vacancies.

At the beginning of each course the drill for officers and N.C.Os. is the same, all being put through squad drill as if they were recruits, since it is thought best to take nothing for granted. Company and battalion drill are also included in the course, and lectures are given on discipline, pay and messing, the lessons of the war, etc. Officers who have not previously fired with the Service rifle are put through a short course of musketry, and all the officers are given ten lectures

on map-reading. All ranks receive frequent instruction in giving words of command. At the end of the course officers are examined in drill and map-reading and the results reported to the head-quarters of commands and the officers commanding units. Special efforts are made to give individual instruction to each N.C.O. in the work of drilling a squad of recruits himself, and by a system of "changing over" all candidates are taught the work of platoons and section commanders.

Already over 20,000 officers and N.C.Os., including a large number from the Dominion's forces, have passed through these courses and have returned to their units to spread the results of their training. Some hundreds of these have been regimental serjeant-majors, who are as keen on the instruction as any. But the help given by this School towards securing one system of drill throughout the British Army is not confined to the training of these instructors. In the autumn of 1916 a number of brigadiers and officers commanding units assembled to see the School methods of training drill instructors, and were thus enabled to form a better judgment as to whether the standard of drill in their own commands was being maintained by their drill instructors. Special courses lasting three weeks have been held there for officers from the junior division of the O.T.C., some of whom have also had occasional vacancies found for them in the regular courses, so that through them the proper notions of drill might be instilled into the minds of our schoolboys. When the officer cadet battalions and the command schools for N.C.Os. were instituted, early in 1916, it was laid down that as far as possible

their drill instructors should be N.C.Os. who had passed through the Chelsea School of Instruction; and with regard to the N.C.O. schools, where one of the principal subjects of training is also drill, it was arranged that these should be confined to junior N.C.Os., Chelsea remaining the central School for the senior N.C.Os. and warrant officers.

Here again the value of the courses at this School can best be seen in its results in the units. Ragged methods of drill, carelessness about saluting, ignorance of the meaning and use of soldierly discipline, which at one time were occasionally observed in some of the units of the New Armies, have now entirely disappeared. When the extraordinary difficulty at the outset of providing enough well-trained instructors is considered, the marvel is not that such faults sometimes appeared, but that they should have been so rapidly obliterated. Various causes have contributed to this improvement, such as better methods of organization and the growing efficiency of officers and N.C.Os., but certainly not the least important is the systematic method adopted of training drill instructors for the whole army on one excellent system, and thus raising and fixing a general standard of drill and discipline.

CHAPTER XII

SPECIAL SCHOOLS OF INSTRUCTION

(3) *Musketry*

MUSKETRY is an accomplishment on which the British Army has long had cause to pride itself. The principal reason for that has been the great amount of care devoted to the subject and the policy of allowing the British soldier plenty of ammunition to fire off during his term of service. During the long training of the Regular soldier, never less than three years, often seven or nine years, he annually fired at least 200 rounds at open-air targets, and had the opportunity of practising under conditions as nearly approaching those of active service as was possible. The Territorials were only required to fire some fifty to seventy rounds in the year, but as a rule they did not confine themselves to this limit. A high standard of marksmanship and the love of musketry in the auxiliary forces and the population generally were maintained by the National Rifle Association, whose annual meetings at Bisley were events of national interest and importance. The multiplication of miniature rifle ranges, largely owing to Lord Roberts' personal enthusiasm and encouragement, has also helped greatly in recent years to spread the love of rifle-shooting throughout the country, especially in

the towns where open-air rifle ranges are less accessible.

For the Army the standard of training in musketry was set by the Hythe School of Musketry. Courses of instruction were held here for officers and warrant and N.C. officers of the Regular, Special Reserve and Territorial Forces. Here also machine-gun courses were held, experiments and tests were made with new inventions in rifles, sights and target apparatus, and modifications of musketry training were considered and, if found suitable, sanctioned. Thus Hythe was the Mecca of musketry instruction for the British Army, and there was no danger of its teaching being neglected, since by the King's Regulations every Regular officer was bound to pass through a course here. In this way so great a number of officers and N.C.Os. had been through Hythe that the standard of musketry was well maintained in every unit by a constant supply of qualified musketry officers and instructors. Staff officers for musketry were attached to brigades and divisions to supervise the instruction, and in addition the commandant of Hythe inspected and wrote an annual report on the shooting of the British Army.

The results of the system of musketry training were seen when the original expeditionary force went to France. Outnumbered as it was in all the early engagements of the war, it would have been overwhelmed and almost wiped out had it not been for its wonderful shooting. At Mons, le Cateau and elsewhere the Germans ventured to approach our trenches in massed formation. They reckoned, it is said, on losing most of their first line from our rapid fire, and

possibly the second, but with the third they expected to come in. But they had not reckoned with the British soldier's "fifteen rounds a minute." In consequence, when the Germans came up in their compact masses the British soldiers found them such an easy target as they had never experienced on the range. With no perceptible pause for reloading their magazines, as an observer noted, the pitiless fire went on from the men lining the trenches, until finally the thick masses broke and withered away. And so it was in all the early battles. When, after a few months, the pick of the Territorials first came out, they also were found to be hardly inferior in musketry. The problem for those at home was to make the shooting of the New Armies not unworthy of the standard set up by the Old Army.

The difficulties in the way of musketry training were at first enough to daunt any but the enthusiasts who came to train and be trained in the New Armies. In accordance with a pre-arranged plan the staff of the Musketry School at Hythe was dispersed and sent to instruct coast defence troops in musketry, and the school itself was closed. The number of trained instructors left in the country to teach the recruits was very small. The supply of rifle ranges was another difficulty. The existing ranges, being just sufficient to enable the Old Army to fire the prescribed courses within the year were obviously not adequate for an army many times as large, whose training had to be crammed into a few months. Even the rifles, as we have already seen,[1] were as precious and almost as scarce as the finest rubies in those early days of the

[1] See above, pp. 53–5.

war. Yet before these hundreds of thousands of recruits could be sent to the Front each one of them would have to be carefully instructed in the handling and care of the rifle, and also to fire his quota of rounds at the practice butts, and so fit himself to shoot rapidly and straight under the conditions of war.

These formidable difficulties could not be overcome in a week or a month. The deficiency most easily supplied, as it turned out, was that of rifle ranges. Not that this was an easy task. The selection of sites for rifle ranges is a task entailing much practical knowledge of musketry and of the possible vagaries of bullets fired by untried shots. Each range has to be selected on its own merits, and, safety to the public being a matter only second to the urgent necessity of teaching men to shoot, it follows that the local conditions of each case, nearness to hutted camps and safety to the public, have to be most carefully weighed. It was sometimes difficult, owing to cultivation, houses, etc., to find spots for ranges near enough to the camps; but in most cases this point of proximity was successfully settled, the range which is furthest from a camp being only four miles off. The question of the danger area was even more difficult. Though the new ranges are only up to 600 yards, the rifle carries up to two miles, and a careless shot may endanger travellers beyond the ranges unless special precautions are taken. It is a great tribute to the care taken in this matter that only three accidents have been reported from firing at ranges, and these three arose from people coming into the danger zone. When these considerations have been attended

to, the various constructional details—butts, target galleries, telephones, etc.—have to be built, all more or less of standard type, but involving much practical application of labour and material.

The Fortifications and Works branch of the War Office was responsible for erecting these ranges, and has just cause to be proud of its labours. Before the war there were 7000 targets available for musketry, not including miniature ranges. Since the beginning of the war between two and three hundred ranges have been built and the number of targets in the country has been nearly doubled; in addition, some 400 miniature ranges have been constructed. Before the war the ranges generally were 800 yards long; those laid out since the war are mostly at 600, though some are at 400 yards. The largest range in the kingdom contains 232 targets; next comes one with 200 targets, one butt being of 90 and another of 48 targets. Most of the butts are fitted with "Reid" target frames, which, being of wood, are more economical than steel, and they turn round on a pivot so that each frame holds two targets. The labour employed in making these ranges was chiefly civilian labour, since soldiers could not generally be spared from their ordinary training, even for this semi-military labour. But there were exceptions in urgent cases during the early days of the war. There is, for example, the story of a pioneer battalion composed of railway men who were told that they must have a range to fire on before they left their camp for another; so they set to work to such good purpose that in ten days they had constructed their range and were shooting on it. With such displays of enthusiasm,

of which this was not an isolated instance, it is no wonder that the material difficulty of ranges was soon surmounted, and within two years of the outbreak of war it was possible to arrange for an allowance on the scale of ten targets, besides a miniature range, for each battalion in the country.

Instructors were a more serious problem. After the expeditionary force had left there were comparatively few left in the country, and with the breaking up of the Hythe School there was no obvious means of training new men for the business. At this stage the value of the voluntary organizations for rifle shooting already existing in the country became apparent. The numerous miniature rifle ranges in towns and country districts generally had an experienced instructor attached to them, as well as several members quite capable of giving instruction. In most cases the military authorities were glad to avail themselves of these ranges freely placed at their disposal by miniature rifle clubs, and to utilize the services of the instructors and expert members to give some preliminary training to recruits. The National Rifle Association proved even more useful in the emergency, since it included among its members some of the best shots in the country. Early in September the Association offered to assist in the musketry instruction of the new units, an offer which was promptly accepted by the Army Council. Commissions were given to many of the members, who were sent out as battalion, brigade or divisional musketry officers to organize the instruction in the New Armies; others were enlisted for home service, and were appointed staff-sergeants for musketry instruction. Later some members were

retained at Bisley, the headquarters of the Association, to form the nucleus of an instructional staff especially for Territorial Force officers and N.C.Os.

These measures were valuable as far as they went, but they did not go far to meet the New Armies' need for thousands of trained musketry instructors. Even had Hythe School been working, its total annual output of under 2000 trained officers and N.C.Os. would not have been nearly sufficient. Accordingly in November, 1914, schools of musketry were established in all the commands. Hythe itself was naturally chosen as one of these schools, but it had no pre-eminence over the others save for the fact that an officer with the old title of Commandant of the School of Musketry had his headquarters there, and the experimental branch was retained. But he no longer had any instructional functions, his duties being confined to the work of inspecting all musketry training, which was only one of the pre-war Commandant's functions. In this capacity he exercises a general supervision over all the command schools, and by means of inspectors of musketry keeps touch with the musketry training of all the units at home.

The command schools of musketry are charged solely with the training of instructors, as was the case at Hythe before the war. At first the urgency of rapid training was so great that the course, which lasted five weeks before the war, was cut down to a fortnight. In March, 1915, when the crying needs of the New Armies had been to some extent met, the course was lengthened to three weeks, and in November of the same year, when instruction in the Lewis gun was added to the musketry course, it was further

extended to twenty-six days for most of the schools. Whereas, then, before the war there was only one school of musketry in the kingdom, there are now nine. The school instructional staff, which numbered some 50 officers and serjt.-instructors at Hythe, has now risen to over 300, distributed among these nine schools; and the total output of officers and N.C.Os. qualified to instruct in musketry in their units has risen from the 2000 annually sent out by Hythe to between 2000 and 3000 monthly sent out by the command schools.

At these schools of musketry the syllabus for the normal course has not greatly varied since the beginning of the war, the chief difference being that with the successive extensions of time more hours can be devoted to each subject. Throughout the course it is constantly borne in mind that the aim is not to produce marksmen, but men able to instruct others in such matters as trigger pressing and loading, care of arms, aiming, judging distance, tests of elementary training, fire orders, fire control, fire discipline, etc. The instruction is carried out partly by lectures, but chiefly by practical work. At the end of the course there is an oral and written examination, and on the results of this examination the candidates are qualified as "distinguished," "first class," "second class," or "failures." The number of failures is very small; in one school only two per cent. or three per cent. of the total number of pupils. The "distinguished," which requires a very high test, in this school have been about five per cent. of the total. In all these schools there are also shorter special courses for range-finding and periodical refresher courses for those who

have already passed through a course, to ensure the maintenance of a high standard.

Even the large number of 2000 or 3000 sent out every month from the command schools of musketry does not fully satisfy the demand for officers and N.C.Os. qualified in musketry, for during the war, as in peace time, the standard aimed at by the War Office is that at least every infantry officer and as many N.C.Os. as possible should have passed through a qualifying course in this all-important subject, if for no other reason because the musketry instructors of units qualified in the schools are constantly being sent to an expeditionary force with their units. Supplementary, therefore, to these command schools there are also divisional and even brigade schools of instruction chiefly at garrison and reserve centres. The organization of these divisional schools is left very much to the judgment of the G.O.C. of the command. A very simple system of perambulating school has been found very successful in one of the areas. One of the musketry inspecting officers of the command, on arriving at the headquarters of a division with his staff-serjeant, sets going a twelve days' course of instruction in musketry for the division. On the completion of this course he proceeds to another division, and there sets going another course. By this simple method between 1500 and 2000 instructors have been trained in one command alone.

The results of this system on the shooting of the British Army have been gradually more and more apparent. During the first year's training it cannot be gainsaid that the supply of instructors trained in the schools was never fully adequate to the demand,

since the schools, in spite of the shortened courses, were not able to turn them out quickly enough. The short supply of rifles was also for a long time a cause of great difficulty in training the New Armies; the recruits always had to learn the manual exercises and even to some extent the preliminary instruction in loading and sighting with non-Service rifles, while for firing on the ranges the few Service rifles that could be allotted to each battalion had to be eked out by changing round. But when men were determined to learn quickly these troubles were somehow overcome.

The difficulties of musketry training were immense for the first year and a half, but no obstacle was allowed to stand in the way of the best form of training, practice in firing with live rounds. One of the secrets of the British infantryman's success in shooting is that during his training he has always fired a greater number of rounds than the infantryman of any other army. We have never thought it wasteful to use ammunition for practice purposes, and this expenditure has been amply justified. The firing of at least 200 practice rounds, which was the general rule for training purposes in peace time, was not indeed found possible in the circumstances of war, but the total number of practice rounds allowed per man has never fallen below 140, whereas the German soldier expends only thirty or forty rounds during his training. Since the first year of war, now that rifles, ammunition and instructors are more plentiful, the number of rounds fired at the range by each recruit has even considerably exceeded this 140.[1] In the

[1] The figures here given do not, of course, include the miniature rifle ammunition fired during training.

organization of musketry training various slightly differing systems of instruction are adopted; but the commonest is as follows:—In the first stage, lasting six weeks, the recruit obtains elementary instruction with his company instructors; during the second stage, which has been nicknamed the "super-dreadnought period," the recruit gets ten days of intensive culture; during those ten days he does nothing but musketry under the best of the men trained at a command school of instruction and under the supervision of the brigade and battalion musketry officers; the final stage consists in firing off the four parts of the practice shooting at the range.

The method of teaching musketry in the British Army to-day is still in all essentials the Hythe method. The main points of this system are, first, always to keep in view the *object* of instruction, namely, training for war. This means in the case of the soldier to enable him to use his rifle to the best advantage under all conditions of active service; in the case of the commander, to enable him to apply his men's fire to the best advantage under all conditions.

The next important point is to follow a definite sequence in instruction. This has a double advantage. First, the instructor is less likely to omit any item of importance, if he follows a regular routine in his instruction. For example, in explaining the correct position in which a man should fire his rifle when standing, the instructor will begin pointing out the correct position of the head, eyes, chin, shoulders, arms and so on down to the feet, instead of jumping from one to the other at random, and so possibly forgetting some important point. Secondly, the

soldier when on active service is more likely to remember the various lessons he learnt during his training, if they have been formed into a habit by being continually practised in the same order. For instance, it is important on service that a man should button up his ammunition pouch as soon as he has taken from it a clip of cartridges, otherwise, while he is rushing forward to the attack or throwing himself on the ground, the rest of his cartridges will fall out and he will find himself without any ammunition. In the excitement of battle it is very easy for a man to forget a detail such as this. To overcome this difficulty the man is taught all through his training to button up his pouch immediately he has taken out a clip of cartridges and put it in the magazine of his rifle. Whether he be practising with dummy cartridges, or with live ammunition on the miniature range or on the full range, his instructor always keeps the corner of his eye on the man's pouch and checks him if ever he leaves it undone. So the habit is formed and the movement of the hand to the side after loading becomes instinctive and automatic even in the excitement of battle. In this theory of creating a habit to counteract the disturbing influence of excitement sequence has the same effect on musketry as drill has on discipline.

Another important point arising out of the last is the necessity for constant practice in the use of the rifle. When a man has been taught how to shoot and has fired his course on the range, it is not considered that he has finished with musketry. If he is to be able to fire ten or fifteen accurate shots a minute he must have his hand and eye and limbs working in perfect

unison. Consequently, the trained soldier spends three hours every day on musketry. Rapid loading, in particular, is practised blindfolded, so that a man can load his rifle without taking his eye off the mark, and can load as well by night as by day.

Another important point is fire direction and control. By constant practice in these duties a company or platoon officer is able to direct the fire of his men on to any target in a landscape, such as a gap in a hedge, or a clump of bushes, or on to a part or the whole of a trench line. This practice, which puts the rifle fire of a company or platoon as completely under the control of an officer as a stream of water issuing from a hose is under the control of a fireman, is one of the most important parts of musketry instruction both for officers and men, and is practised again and again till the men can alter their ranges rapidly, pick up targets instantly and immediately, obey any orders that may be given them by their officers and N.C.Os. In the teaching of fire discipline and fire control great use has been made of "landscape targets." These targets are pictures of a piece of ground such as one would expect to fight over on active service. During wet weather they form an excellent substitute for the open country in training men to describe a piece of ground or to recognize a particular point which is indicated to them on a target. A squad of men with miniature rifles and ammunition can be practised in firing at these targets and can learn all the lessons of fire discipline and fire control, at a tenth of the cost of using Service ammunition on the open range.

By keeping these main objects before all, and having a system of instruction which interests the men by its

lucidity and practical nature, we have succeeded in keeping up a high standard of musketry at the front. The old fifteen well-aimed rounds a minute of the first expeditionary force has not indeed been generally attainable—the time for training is not long enough—but in most battalions of the British Army ten or even twelve well-aimed rounds a minute is an ideal which can generally be reached.

PART III

THE RAISING OF NEW CORPS

CHAPTER XIII

THE BEGINNING OF THE MACHINE-GUN CORPS

So far we have been dealing chiefly with the training given to officers, N.C.Os. and men of the Infantry, who form the great bulk of our armies. In addition to this, specialized training is necessary for corps such as the R.A., the R.E. and the A.S.C., and some of the newer branches of the Army.

One of the most interesting developments of the war has been the formation, after experience of the necessities of the case, of special corps to take up special branches of military work. There is probably a tendency in all wars for such special corps to be developed as a result of the particular nature of the fighting. An interesting example of that was the formation of the Mounted Infantry Corps in the South African War, to meet the peculiar needs of veldt fighting, where great mobility in connection with the use of the rifle was especially needed. In this war hitherto immobility rather than mobility has been the note of the operations (at any rate on the Western front), and there has been no need for mounted infantry, and, indeed, little, since the first months of the war, for cavalry. On the other hand, several special needs have arisen from the nature of trench warfare and of the country in which we have been fighting—*e. g.* all means for the rapid transit of troops,

arms and supplies from one part of the line to the other have had to be developed. Thus the Railway Companies of the R.E., the Inland Water Transport Service over the Canals of Flanders and Northern France, the Labour Battalions, to make roads as the trenches are carried forward, and Mechanical Transport of all kinds have been of the utmost importance. Consequently, the men attached to these branches of locomotion have necessarily been greatly increased in numbers and require special training. Similarly, the need for the rapid transmission of messages, swift reconnaissances and vigilant patrol work has raised the importance of cyclists and led to the formation of a special corps of Army Cyclists. But perhaps the most interesting of all these developments is the enormously increased importance of machine-guns and the consequent creation of the Machine-gun Corps.

At the beginning of the war, as is well known, the establishment of machine-guns in the army was only two per unit of infantry or cavalry, viz. a battalion of infantry and a regiment of cavalry each had a couple of machine-guns atached to it, and no more. These machine-guns were under the charge of and worked by special machine-gun sections of the unit. What is less known, perhaps, is that the Germans also started war with no more than two machine-guns per 1000 men.

As trench warfare developed, however, it was very soon seen how great a part machine-guns must play both in attack and defence, and it was also very soon seen that the original supply of machine-guns to a unit, and the number of men working them, was

entirely inadequate to the work which might be required of them. It would be no exaggeration to say that in trench warfare one skilfully worked machine-gun can take the place of a platoon of men with rifles —naturally a great saving both in arms and in man power. This fact was certainly realized in practice by the Germans sooner than by ourselves, just as they had obviously studied more scientifically than we had the possibilities of trench warfare generally. Accordingly, in the earlier stages of the trench campaign they were able to mass machine-guns at important positions, while we were still confined to our two guns per battalion.

The authorities at the War Office had also, in the early days of the war, realized that more machine-guns per unit would probably be necessary, and in ordering fresh supplies had made provision accordingly. Their foresight was justified, since in 1915 Field-Marshal French made progressively increasing demands for supplies of machine-guns. Unfortunately, we could not at first cope with the Germans in this respect, since our manufacturing resources were not then adequate to cope with the demands for the front; though after the middle of 1915 the supply began to be more satisfactory. The increased demands for machine-guns naturally entailed an increase of trained personnel to serve them. At the same time, the existing organization of machine-gun sections was found to be defective in practice. As long as the machine-gun section was merely a part of a larger cavalry or infantry unit, promotion in the section depended not on the particular work of the machine-gunners but on the battalion rota for promotion, a

circumstance which gave rise to unfairness and heart-burning. Again drafts were a difficulty: each draft-producing unit of infantry or cavalry at home had to train machine-gunners for its corresponding unit at the front; accordingly, if the casualties were heavy in a machine-gun section, the home unit might be suddenly depleted of all its trained machine-gunners and have no more ready for some time, while another home unit might have to keep its trained machine-gunners for an indefinite period if the section at the front had few losses. Lastly, the work of machine-gunners was becoming so important and so specialized that a more scientific and intensive training than they could obtain in a cavalry or infantry unit was required. In a word, greater elasticity was needed for machine-gun units in regard to promotion, the supply of drafts and training.

These considerations had even before the war been urged by those chiefly responsible for machine-gun training at Hythe in favour of a separate corps for machine-guns. By the middle of 1915 the authorities, both at the War Office and at Headquarters in France, had simultaneously arrived at a similar conclusion. It was then determined to form a Machine-gun Corps with an organization entirely distinct from the infantry and cavalry. These arms of the Service were not left entirely without machine-guns of their own, since a quota of Lewis guns was still left for use by machine-gun detachments of the battalions: but these are comparatively easy to handle, and their use can be learned in a few days by a trained infantryman or cavalryman. The more important Vickers machine-guns, on the other hand, which require careful drilling

and much practice for their effective use, were assigned to the new Machine-gun Corps. On the 22nd of October, 1915, the Royal Warrant constituting the new corps and laying down its establishment was published in Army Orders. At first the Machine-gun Corps was divided into three branches, Infantry, Cavalry, and Motor; subsequently a fourth branch, Heavy, was added to include the "Tanks." The fighting unit for the infantry is the machine-gun company with 16 guns, for the cavalry the machine-gun squadron with 12 guns, and for the motor service the battery of 6 guns. All the machine-gun sections of infantry and cavalry units in France were at once formed into companies and squadrons of the new corps, and a training centre established at an army base, for the further instruction of the officers and men as they could be spared from the front. This training centre began on a modest scale in November, 1914, with one officer and one School of Musketry instructor from Hythe to train a small class of instructors. Since then it has passed out thousands of officers and men, and has now a staff of some 200 officers and N.C.O. instructors.[1]

In England the task was even more difficult, for all the new companies, squadrons and motor-batteries, besides drafts for the units already in France, had to be formed and trained out of practically raw material drawn principally from infantry and cavalry units. The motor machine-gun service was established at a training centre of its own, but the principal work in forming the new Machine-gun Corps was carried out

[1] At this school the use of the Lewis gun is also taught, and accounts for the largest number of pupils.

at the training centre for the infantry and cavalry branches, which became the headquarters of the corps in England. The development of this centre merits attention as a typical instance of improvised organization.

Early in October, before the Army Order constituting the corps was actually published, a beginning was made with its formation. A camp was chosen, and a Brigadier with a small staff went down to make preliminary arrangements as best they could. When they arrived at the camp chosen they found they would have to rely almost entirely on their own resources. The camp was a small one, which would hold perhaps a quarter of the number of men it was intended should be trained there for the corps. The first thing to be done was to choose a site for a second camp, and within a week the contractors were on the ground to discuss the new building arrangements. A few days later a fatigue party came to take over the old camp and to tidy up for the new arrivals. A week later there was a sudden alarm that the authorities had not finally decided whether the training centre should after all be at this camp or somewhere else, and for some days there was a good deal of sending and countermanding of orders. As an instance of this uncertainty it is recorded that one day towards the end of October two motor lorries (one of which broke down on the way) and one car arrived with a large consignment of stationery, and that on the following day arrangements had to be made to remove the stationery to the alternative camp. However, the prospect soon became brighter, for shortly afterwards a few guns arrived, and then some assistant instruc-

tors and staff-serjeants; but as there was nothing for the latter to do until the site of the camp had been finally decided, they were all given a week's leave.

By the first week in November the site of the camp had been irrevocably fixed, as originally intended, and the staff were able to pursue their work with more confidence. The buildings for the new extension were hurried on, the instruction of some N.C.Os. sent on a refresher course was taken in hand, and all the details required for starting a big undertaking were pressed forward. Among other things a board of officers met daily to consider a textbook for instruction in machine-gun training. More guns arrived, and then, only five weeks after the first arrival of the organizing staff, the first 1010 men of the Machine-gun Corps began to come in. If all the thousand had arrived from one place it would have been hard enough to deal with so many at once, as there were no N.C.Os. to take charge of them, and the receiving staff consisted of only three officers and one quartermaster serjeant. But, so far from being a homogeneous body, the new recruits were drawn from 101 separate units, and kept arriving in driblets at different times between dawn one morning till 4 a.m. the next. They arrived with no nominal rolls and no lists of kit and no rations. However, the small staff at the centre worked with a will, drew bedding for the men as they arrived, saw that they had a hot meal, and within three days had collected the necessary information about them and sorted them out into some order. It is stated that, though the quartermaster had a bed put in his office during this time of strain, he did not use it for seventy-two consecutive hours. The work

of settling the first thousand was completed only just in time, for three days after their arrival 2000 more came in exactly the same circumstances, from all parts of the country, without N.C.Os., nominal rolls, rations, kit lists or documents, and had to be dealt with by the same rough-and-ready methods. Some complaints were heard from this second 2000, and this is hardly to be wondered at: the food at dinner was said to be short, as it may well have been; but the Colonel in charge set everything right by ordering a big tea instead. Concurrently with the arrival of these recruits, large numbers of officers were also arriving for instructional courses; but it was not till ten days after the arrival of the first recruits that sixty cooks came to take charge of the catering. These cooks must have been a godsend, for the men still came pouring into the camp from all parts of the United Kingdom: within two months of the day when the small staff came down to set the camp going, it already contained 439 officers and 6000 other ranks.

For some weeks during this early influx of men there was naturally considerable difficulty in evolving an ordered system for the new corps. The builders and carpenters were about, erecting the new huts as fast as possible, but their presence did not make for comfort or tend to diminish the confusion, and the effect of their operations on the state of the roads and the camps was aggravated by the wet and wintry days of November and December. The distribution of a crowd of unknown men to their proper spheres in the routine of duty was no easy task, especially as the necessary documents for identifying them were sometimes absent. Moreover, some of the men sent by

their battalion commanders seemed to have been chosen not for their aptitude for the work of machine-gunners, but because they could well be spared from their old units: many of these had to be returned whence they came. As an instance of the minor troubles due to the confusion of the early days, it is stated that, owing to the want of proper nominal rolls, the postal arrangements completely broke down at first, and that within a few weeks twenty mail bags of parcels, besides 5000 letters and 200 registered letters, had accumulated, that could not be delivered as their owners could not be found. The payment of men was another difficulty, as the pay-sheets were still left with the units whence the men originally came, and several weeks passed before these men were formally incorporated in the M.G.C., and regular pay-sheets for the corps could be made out. There was also a great lack of equipment. At first very few stores except guns had arrived, and it was more than two months before there were any horses or limbers in the camp. Again, the arrangements for the officers' mess could not be satisfactorily completed until various formalities about the status of the officers sent to be instructed at the centre had been considered, and for some time the services of a large catering establishment had to be privately guaranteed by the staff. But it is satisfactory to note that, except for the defective dinner, so promptly remedied, of the second 2000 recruits, no complaint was ever heard of the feeding of the men.

Those in charge of the new corps were, however, not to be disheartened. They were all enthusiasts who had long been urging its establishment, and were

all determined to make it a success. With the goodwill of all concerned, and the staunch support of the authorities at Whitehall, order was brought out of the chaos in a remarkably short time. Three weeks after the first batch of recruits had arrived, twelve Machine-gun companies and two Depôt companies had been formed, and a week later twelve more were added. By Christmas time a third dozen companies had been formed and two more Depôt companies. Long before that date horses and equipment had begun to flow in, and instruction classes both for new companies and for the training of officers and N.C.Os. had been started. Four weeks after the camp was opened to recruits machine-gun companies were firing their courses at the ranges. An energetic officer in charge of letters was appointed, and the postal difficulties were soon overcome; so, also, were the pay difficulties. A receiving office was constituted to sort out the recruits for the corps, as they arrived, and determine if they were suitable for machine-gunners; if not, they were at once returned to their former units. By no means every man is fitted to be a machine-gunner: he requires considerable physical strength to carry the various parts of his weapon hurriedly about or over the trenches, and also intelligence, resourcefulness and a good eye. Thus the receiving office had very important work in discriminating among the recruits, especially in the early days of the corps. The officers' mess was put on a satisfactory footing, and in connection with it an interesting experiment was tried. Within a few months the number of officers either attached to companies or under instruction in the school was often as high as 1000, and the cooking

and waiting on so many became a serious problem. Fatigue men were scarce, and men fit for the corps could not be spared. Accordingly, leave was asked and granted to employ women as cooks and waiters. An association for the employment of women, under Lady Londonderry's direction, was applied to for a staff, after a separate camping ground, with proper accommodation for women, had been arranged. This experiment has proved a great success. In spite, too, of this strenuous work the staff of the corps established the happiest relations with the neighbouring townsfolk and the countryside. The nobleman in whose park one of the camps was situated proved a good friend to the corps, and showed it many acts of kindness. Not the least appreciated was the gift of mince pies for the first Christmas dinner to the men not on leave—a dinner which was also cheered by the reading of the King's gracious message.

From this time onwards, in spite of continued increases in numbers, the training centre very rapidly settled down to the normal conditions of an established corps. The hard work entailed on a small staff by this rapid progress can hardly be overrated. A camp big enough for 5000 or 6000 had to be enlarged to hold about 25,000 men; workshops for the repair of guns and equipment, lecture-rooms and experimental laboratories had to be built; ranges had to be selected and laid out; huge mobilization depôts had to be built and filled with stores, with which to equip without delay companies or drafts ordered to the front, sometimes at a few hours' notice. The document of each individual in the new corps had to be drawn up and tabulated, and their wills collected

and sent for safe custody to the Officer i/c Records. Instruction courses were organized and carried on for the training of companies and drafts to be sent to the front, as well as for the training of the instructors, assistant instructors and staff N.C.Os., who were in their turn to train these companies and drafts. Instruction in bomb-throwing, cookery and drill had to be thought of. Even the textbook for machine-gun training had to be drawn up by the Staff.

The organization of the corps and of the training centre was also proceeded with apace. For training purposes there are two groups: (I) the School and Administrative Group, and (II) the Training Group. To (I) the School and Administrative Group, quartered in the new camp, belong the various schools of instruction for officers, N.C.Os., signallers and artificers, as well as the receiving depôt, which sorts out the recruits, and a convalescent depôt for those invalided or wounded from the front. Except for the Motor Machine-gun branch, no direct enlistments were then made into the M.G.C., the men being transferred to it from cavalry and infantry units. Officers from regular battalions were seconded to the corps, officers from the Service battalions, etc., of the New Army transferred to it: since the early days, however, a cadet battalion for the M.G.C. has been established at another centre, from which a supply of officers is now drawn. In (II), the Training Group, quartered in the old camp, the battalions and regiments of companies and squadrons to be sent to the front as complete units are trained, and also the battalions and regiments of depôt companies and squadrons from which drafts are drawn. A motor battalion and

depôt, or draft-producing, companies of the R.N. division and some Colonial machine-gunners are also trained with this group.

The system of instruction adopted required the deepest consideration; for, besides the specialized instruction in the art of the machine-gun, the men had to be trained in the first place as soldiers. One of the most difficult problems was to give men brought from hundreds of different units, many of them with slightly different systems of drill, the distinction and *esprit de corps* required for an arm of the service which had all its traditions and regimental pride to create. With this object in view the G.O.C. has always attached very great importance to smartness of appearance and manner both on and off the parade ground and to exact discipline. He knew that men would not make good soldiers unless they were proud of themselves, of their uniform and of the corps to which they belonged. For this reason a special badge was devised and ordered to be worn by all members of the corps, and the corps spirit has been further fostered by a special journal brought out by its members. Great importance was also attached to the order and seemliness observed by the men in the neighbouring town. To ensure this a mounted patrol was sent through the streets nightly, and it would be difficult to find a smarter body of men than this patrol, as it starts proudly forth on its nightly round, in any of the oldest and proudest corps. Both for this general training in soldierly conduct and for the technical training in machine gunnery the basis was found in the Schools of Instruction of Group 1 for officers and N.C.Os. At first the training in these

schools was necessarily not so elaborate as it has become after experience and careful consideration, especially as instructors had to be found hurriedly for the growing crowds of recruits. Officers on joining the corps first went for a three-weeks' course to the "Officers' School": here they are taught interior economy, topography, revolver drill and firing, law, telephone, stable management, tactics, visual training, drill and physical training. The utmost exactness and smartness—in a word, the rigour of the game—are especially insisted on in this school.

N.C.Os. posted to the centre first go to the "Non-commissioned Officers' School," which is intended to train drill instructors for the "Officers' School" as well as N.C.Os. for the Machine-gun Companies. The course lasts five weeks and includes all subjects, except machine-gun work, which it is necessary for a N.C.O. to know. Both this and the "Officers' School" are under the direction of one officer.

After these preliminary courses comes the "Machine-gun School," the pivot on which the whole Centre revolves. There Officers and N.C.Os. are taught all the technical branch of machine-gun training, besides entrenching, trench relief, tactical handling of companies and sections. The course in this school lasts five weeks for N.C.Os. and seven weeks for officers, who during that time also attend the riding school, and are required to pass in riding at the end of the course.

For certain officers the whole of this training is not required. Those who join the centre from the Machine-gun Corps' own cadet battalion are considered sufficiently trained to be posted at once to Machine-gun

Companies, while those from infantry cadet battalions leave out the "Officers' School" and go direct to the "Machine-gun School." Refresher courses of fourteen days are given in the "Machine-gun School" to officers of the corps who are posted to the training centre from the front.

To ensure the maintenance of the standard of instruction in these schools, the chief instructors keep a constant watch on their large staff of assistant instructors, removing those who prove remiss and promoting the efficient; promising pupils from the classes are also picked out for further training and periodically added to the staff of instructors.

There are also in Group I a signalling course for 700 pupils lasting nine weeks, an Artificer Armourers' School, in which the course lasts ten weeks, and, periodically, courses of instruction lasting ten days in the tactical handling of the Lewis gun, which are attended by regimental officers drawn from the various commands.

In Group II the men of the companies and squadrons are trained for their work in the field under the supervision of staff instructors, selected by the Chief Instructor of the Machine-gun School, but under the immediate command of officers and N.C.Os. already trained in Group I and destined to take them out to the front. The length of training in Group II depends to a large extent on the requirements at the front, but it never lasts less than three months, and, with the increase of the corps, is being extended.

The devoted work of that small band of enthusiasts who started the corps has had its reward. Within three months from that troubled day in October when

the first "new boys" arrived in higgledy-piggledy fashion at the new school, the first dozen machine-gun companies ever trained in England were ready to go overseas. Their departure was a credit to the corps. The full twelve companies were all entrained in separate trains between 9.50 one evening and 8.45 the next morning. As it was rather an occasion, the Brigadier was present at the station most of the night, and a telegram was sent to the King assuring His Majesty that this new corps "will do all in its power to add to the illustrious fame of His Majesty's forces," to which the King returned a gracious reply, saying that "He had watched the progress of this new corps since its inception, and was confident it would prove a valuable addition to his forces in the field." The Brigadier also published an Order in which he noted "with pleasure the great improvement in conduct of N.C.Os. and men in the corps, and in consequence cancels orders for several patrols hitherto considered necessary, and praises especially the excellent manner in which the N.C.Os. and men proceeding overseas were paraded and entrained."

After this there is very little history to record of the corps in England. Improvements are constantly being made in organization and methods of instruction; for the men at the head of the school are not bound by any red tape, and are never so satisfied with anything as to think that it is not susceptible of improvement. Six weeks after the first dozen companies had gone abroad one of their number was awarded the D.C.M. for a splendid example of coolness and steadiness before the enemy. Little more than six months after the inauguration of the corps sixty-five

companies had already been trained at the training centre and sent overseas, and draft-producing units, not only for these companies but also for the numerous companies originally formed in France, had been set up. The Machine-gun Corps, in its origin and development, is a very good instance of the British methods of carrying things through. We do not, as a rule, forecast events much beforehand, and are apt to be found wanting at the start. But, once a course is found to be advisable, the men ready to see it through are generally to be found, and are not apt to be deterred by apparently insurmountable difficulties.

CHAPTER XIV

TANKS

Monstrum horrendum, informe, ingens, cui lumen ademptum

(1) *The Need for Tanks*

The Machine-gun Corps as constituted in October, 1915, was divided into an infantry, a cavalry, and a motor branch. Six months later a new section was formed at Bisley. The men for this new section were taken from the pick of the Derby recruits; for the junior officers two colonels went on a voyage of discovery to cadet battalions and other units, and selected promising young men with a knowledge of internal combustion engines who had given proofs of an adventurous spirit and of ability to make men move. For some time the object of the new unit remained a mystery even to those drafted into it, except so far as the qualifications required of the officers afforded an inkling. The name given to the new organization—the Heavy Armoured Section of the Motor Machine-gun Service—only deepened the mystery, as there were no signs of cars, armoured or unarmoured, and the only training given to the men was foot drill and machine-gun practice. However, after some time spent in these occupations the colonel in command

addressed the company commanders and some other officers on parade, and after commending the spirit they had hitherto shown, bade them be of good heart, as a wonderful new car, which would astonish them all, was shortly to be issued to them for service in the field.

At last it was announced that the new car was ready. But it was not brought to the camp near Aldershot where the section was stationed: that was far too much in the public eye. A site had been chosen in a more remote part of the country: there a camp was pitched, carefully screened from inquisitive passers-by; it was surrounded by fences and guarded by sentries posted at intervals of one hundred yards, with orders to admit no one who was not furnished with a special pass. Companies of the Armoured Car Section, as soon as their preliminary training was completed, were successively drafted to this camp to become familiarized with their weapon of destruction. The new armoured car concealed in this lair certainly had all the promised elements of surprise. At first sight it appeared little more than a huge shapeless bulk of metal; it was said to weigh some forty tons, was armour-plated all over, with tiny spy-holes at intervals, from some of which peeped out murderous-looking gun-muzzles, and it had no visible means of progression except two small motor-wheels attached like a tail behind. When it began to move it seemed like some disgusting antediluvian monster come back to vex the earth for its sins: with horrible grunting and coughing noises it waddled and slithered and squelched over the ground with the motion of some loathsome and gigantic caterpillar: the wheels behind

were found to act only as a rudder to direct its course, the propulsive force coming from some internal and invisible wheels that travelled over long, endless metal tracks, extending in an elliptical shape from the snout to the rump, and moving forward as the creature advanced. The pace at which this strange object travelled was very slow—barely three miles an hour—but the slow motion served only to increase its horror. It seemed to move with an uncanny and yet almost human deliberation over walls and ditches, through bog and marsh, breaking down barbed wire fences or parapets that stood in its way, as if they were mere feather-weights. The first company of the Heavy Armoured Car Section were delighted with the spectacle of the creature entrusted to their care, and promptly adopted the name Big Willie, with which their new pet had previously been christened. The two next of the same breed to come in were called Little Willie and Mother.

Movable engines of war to protect soldiers advancing to the attack of entrenching positions are, of course, no new invention. Apart from the Trojan Horse, which was more in the nature of a ruse than an engine of offence, the Greeks, as we know, employed movable turrets on wheels, wherewith to approach fortified towns and batter the walls at close quarters. The Romans had various elaborate devices for the same purpose. The simplest was the *testudo*, formed by the interlocked shields of a party of soldiers, which some of them tilted against the walls of a citadel as a protection against the blows of the defenders, whilst the rest, under cover of it, carried on sapping operations. Slightly more elaborate were the *vinea* and

musculus, low pent-house forms of cover under which men worked at trenching operations, or which they pushed forward on wheels to the attack of the enemy's position. Lastly, there was the *turris mobilis*, an imposing and complicated structure of wood protected with iron, raw hide and quilts, which were moistened and impregnated with alum as a protection against fire. This tower had several tiers: on the lowest was the battering-ram, and on the upper tiers were huge catapults and slings, and movable bridges for boarding purposes: the crew was composed of archers, slingers and artillerymen: the whole thing was moved forward by wheels concealed under the structure to prevent their being shot away.

Cæsar relates that in one of his campaigns against a Teutonic tribe he erected one of these towers to attack their entrenchments. When the barbarians saw the tower being erected in the Roman Camp they laughed, but when they saw it approaching their own camp, they were so cast down by the terrifying spectacle that they sued for peace on the ground that it was useless to fight against a nation so evidently under divine protection as to be able to move such a high machine with such celerity.

In later ages similar contrivances were used. We read of movable towers, very similar to those employed by the Romans, being brought up by the Goths in the sixth century to batter the walls of Rome; here they were a failure, but five centuries later they were used with notable success at the siege of Jerusalem by the Crusaders. William the Conqueror made use of them for the conquest of England, and William Rufus erected a movable turret, aptly named *La*

Malvoisin, to help him in the assault on Bamborough Castle. After the twelfth century, however, the *beffrois*, as these engines came to be called, fell more and more into disuse, and for many centuries have altogether disappeared. At first this was due to the great improvement in the art of fortification, and to the increasing efficiency of weapons and devices in the hands of defenders: later the invention of gunpowder and the rapid progress in artillery made it much easier and safer to breach a rampart with guns fired at a safe distance than with these clumsy and unwieldy engines at close quarters.

One curious result of arraying the hostile forces at such close quarters in the present war is the revival of many forms of warlike instruments and devices which had previously seemed altogether obsolete. Hand-grenades to throw from one trench into the other or with which to clear dug-outs, steel helmets as a protection against shrapnel bullets, catapults and short range mortars to carry the hundred yards or so across No Man's Land, carry us far back to the methods of the Middle Ages: while talk of sap and counter-sap, mines and counter-mines, traverses and counter-scarps recall Uncle Toby's racy reminiscences of his leisurely wars in these same Low Countries. The Germans' introduction of liquid fire and poison gas remind us of Greek fire and other abominations once employed, but long forbidden in warfare between civilized nations. But the attempts made to protect the lives of infantry and crush down opposition in the trenches carry us back to methods employed by the ancient Greeks and Romans.

Strangely enough, the very high pitch of excellence

to which artillery and rifle fire and the development of the machine-gun and automatic rifle have now been brought has been one of the causes for a revival of obsolete monsters, such as the *turris mobilis*. Guns have never been so numerous, so well supplied with ammunition and able to carry such long distances as those brought into the field in this war. At the same time, by a singular paradox, the fighting forces have not been arrayed so close to one another for so long a period since the wars of the Middle Ages. After the battle of the Aisne the war on the Western front became almost stationary: attempts have been made to break through, but a real turning movement of lines guarded by continuous armies from the sea to the mountain frontiers has been out of the question. With this stationary warfare the enormously increased power of artillery and the long range, rapidity and accuracy of rifle and machine-gun fire made the need of elaborate entrenchments irresistible if the opposing armies were to remain in being at all. When, however, the system of trench warfare had once been adopted there was every reason to bring these trenches as near as possible to the enemy's. For, though both sides may to a certain extent be immobilized by the tremendous power of gun and rifle fire, yet the decision, in trench warfare as in every other form of war, must rest ultimately on the success of the infantry attack—almost, one may say, of the hand to hand combat. Now, as a protection trenches are just as good fifty or a hundred yards off as a mile away; while for this main business of war, to get to grips with the enemy, the nearer they are the better. If every other method fails, you can sap through to the

enemy's trenches for a reasonably short distance, blow them up with mines and then go for the survivors: if, as is usually the case, you decide to go over the top and make your way into his trenches, the less the distance to traverse, the more likelihood there is of your reaching the enemy's trenches alive. When the infantry is once launched over the comparatively short distance termed No Man's Land for the attack of the first line trenches and thence, perhaps, to the second and third lines, the fire of the enemy's artillery, owing to the length of range and the difficulty of accurate observation of fire, becomes much less formidable. On the other hand, the fire of his rifles and machine-guns becomes much more deadly, partly owing to reduced range, and partly owing to the fact that the artillery of the attack is less able to deal with it. This rifle and machine-gun fire has been rendered even more deadly by the elaborate system of barbed wire entanglements in front of the trenches, the object of which is to hold the infantry up under the close fire of the defenders. The problem, therefore, very soon presented itself how to find the most effective means of crossing the wire without delay and of protecting the assaulting infantry, as far as possible, against rifle and machine-gun fire.

In the autumn of 1914, when the opponents had settled down to trench warfare, it became obvious that some means of parrying the danger of well directed and well protected machine-gun fire from the German trenches must be discovered if our infantry were to carry out assaults with success. A suggestion was made in the first November of the war to revive the *testudo;* and accordingly a form of shield on wheels,

which could be pushed in front of an attacking party, was experimented with in Flanders. But it was found cumbersome, and gave no overhead or flank protection, and was accordingly discarded. The French introduced, with more success, a machine-gun on a wheeled carriage with overhead and frontal protection, which the machine-gunner could propel forward under cover, pausing occasionally to fire at the Germans.

Then the idea of a self-propelled armoured car which could move unscathed over unprotected ground, could crush down wire entanglements, and carry guns with a crew to work them, occurred to several people both in the Army and the Navy. Such an engine, recalling the *turris mobilis* of Livy and the *beffroi* of the Middle Ages, would not only be able to tackle troublesome machine-guns in the German trenches, but would also help to clear a way through barbed wire obstacles for the infantry.

(2) *The Evolution of the Tank*

Even before this war the development of the caterpillar tractor had suggested to a few far-sighted people the possibility of evolving from this invention a machine capable of offensive use over rough country in close warfare. But no practical machine had hitherto been designed. When, however, the campaign of 1914 resolved itself, especially on the Western front, chiefly into a form of trench warfare, the attention of several officers both in the Navy and the Army was turned to the uses which could be made of such an engine. One of the conceptions put forward was for a wonderful machine 100 feet long, 46 feet high,

and 80 feet wide, weighing some 300 tons, propelled by an 800-h.p. engine, and with driving-wheels having a diameter of 40 feet. Among the earliest of the more practical suggestions was one by Colonel Swinton, the first commanding officer of the "Heavy Section," in October, 1914, to build armoured cars on the Holt tractor system, an American invention, or on a similar caterpillar principle, to smash through wire entanglements and climb trenches. This idea was subsequently referred to the Committee of Imperial Defence and the War Office, and experiments with various tractors were made on behalf of the War Office, for some time without practical result. In the meantime a similar idea had occurred to officers in the Royal Naval Air Service, and Mr. Churchill, then First Lord, took it up warmly. He referred suggestions for a heavy armoured car, capable of travelling over rough country and able to deal with machine-guns, to a small expert Committee, presided over by the Chief Naval Constructor to the Admiralty, and containing representatives from the Admiralty, the Army and a few civil engineers. This committee was empowered not only to draw up designs but also to spend money on working tests. Thus from two angles the problem was being considered, and it is perhaps due to the fact that at this early stage independent investigations were being conducted for a common aim that the solution was found so soon.

At any rate, when in June, 1915, the Commander-in-Chief in France sent in a memorandum urging an exhaustive examination of the question, the two State Departments chiefly concerned had the matter well in hand. Moreover, the Ministry of Munitions, which

had recently been established, was also considering the matter. Through the medium of the Committee of Imperial Defence the various efforts for the solution of the problem were co-ordinated, and a committee, of which Mr. Churchill was a member, was appointed to decide on the distribution of the work. According to the recommendations of this committee the War Office laid down the conditions which had to be fulfilled by the car. It should be able to climb a five-foot parapet and cross a ten-foot ditch; in weight and width it had to conform to the measurements of standard War Office bridges and to railway transportation requirements, and it must not be too high, for reasons of visibility to the enemy: it must be protected against close range rifle and machine-gun fire, and it must be able to destroy machine-gun emplacements. It was agreed, however, that the first experimental work should be left in the hands of the Admiralty Committee. There is a certain analogy between the principles of construction involved in building a ship and those to be taken into consideration in planning a machine, required to travel over very broken country and exposed to similar strains and stresses in crossing trenches and plunging in and out of shell-holes and those involved in the design of a ship labouring in a disturbed and angry sea. Hence the knowledge and experience of the chief naval constructor were invaluable as chairman of the committee on designs. The committee was also reinforced by representatives of the War Office and the Ministry of Munitions. When the experimental work was completed the construction of the machines was to be handed over to the Ministry of Munitions.

A year was spent by the Admiralty Committee in researches and experiments before a satisfactory machine was designed and constructed. Trials were at first made with various mechanically propelled vehicles from firms in England and America. Some were able to surmount obstacles satisfactorily, but broke down hopelessly when the full weight of armour-plating and guns was imposed upon them: others could stand the weight but could not climb parapets or cross ditches: there were difficulties about the steering and the armour-plating of the cars, about the kinds of guns to be carried, and as to the best form of engine, which had to be powerful enough to move a heavy machine over the roughest country and to work a necessarily stiff system of gearing. These were some of the main difficulties, but it is hardly an exaggeration to say that every detail to be considered had its own difficulty. Finally, from among the numerous types of tractors inspected the most satisfactory was found to be a caterpillar tractor with an endless self-laid track, over which internal driving-wheels could be propelled by the engines. Some time in the middle of 1915 a wooden model of the new machine was constructed and conveyed to a carefully screened enclosure, where it was thoroughly inspected by a number of officers, and various suggestions were made for its improvement. Then the manufacture of a specimen machine was taken in hand. This was no easy task, even when the design had been fixed, as the manufacturers capable of turning out the parts required were limited in number, and it was not thought advisable to let any one firm make the whole machine for fear of leakage of information. This necessity of

splitting up the work added to the difficulty of supervision. Moreover, at every stage new questions of construction arose which often necessitated the scrapping of previous work and beginning afresh.

Finally, however, in February, 1916, a machine was completed and taken down to a park near London. Here, pits, trenches and ramparts had been constructed, and there was an abundance of marshy ground suitable for the most exacting tests. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff, several Cabinet Ministers, and a number of officers came down to see the machine perform an exhibition trip. The tests to which it was put were so satisfactorily carried out that an order was given on the spot for one hundred machines to be put in hand. From this point, the Ministry of Munitions, assisted, of course, by members of the original committee, became responsible for the construction of machines.

The making of these new engines of warfare was still necessarily a slow business. Improvements were continually being adopted, which necessitated changes in the original designs, and men had to be specially trained in the factories for the work required. It was not, therefore, as we have seen, till about July, 1916, that the first consignment arrived at the secret manœuvre-ground to meet the personnel which was to use them.

The new machines, as delivered at the secret camp, were found to be of two slightly different designs. One, called the *male*, was armed with two Hotchkiss Q.F. guns, with a subsidiary armament of some machine-guns. These were especially designed for dealing at close quarters with the concrete emplacements

for the German machine-guns. The other type, called the *female*, was armed only with machine-guns, and was more suitable for dealing with machine-gun personnel and riflemen than with the emplacements.

One of the most remarkable features in the early history of Tanks was the success with which their secret was guarded. Even during the period of design and experiment hundreds of people must have known of them, especially after the first exhibition of a completed machine in February, 1916. Apart from all the naval and military officers, engineers and contractors brought in to advise as to their construction, a large number of chauffeurs and mechanics had to be initiated into their working before they could even be tested and exhibited. Then, after the first consignment was brought to the Tank camp, a large body of guards for the camp besides all the members of the section were in the conspiracy. In fact, by July, 1916, thousands of people must have known of their existence and most of these have seen them. By all the rules of probability, a mystery so widely shared should very soon have become a *secret de Polichinelle*.

Nevertheless, the secret was perfectly kept. This was due partly to the extraordinary precautions taken by those responsible for the construction, but chiefly to the loyalty of all concerned. Of course, some inkling escaped that a strange machine was being prepared: that could hardly have been avoided. But nobody was any the wiser for the few hints that may have reached his ears. If some speiring body was too persistent in his inquiries about the new engine of war, he could easily be put off by an assurance that such a thing had been considered, but had proved a

failure. In the taverns of the villages near the secret manœuvre-ground questions were sometimes put to the men from the camp as to the portentous secret so jealously guarded there. Yes, it was true, some grave-faced serjeant would solemnly reply, there was a secret, but among friends he would not mind telling them what it was: it was really a gigantic mechanical serpent which would have the power of burrowing underground from our own to the German trenches, and when it had got there it would squirm and flatten every German along the whole length of the trenches.

The nomenclature adopted also helped to preserve the secret. It was necessary in the offices where the matter was under consideration to have some catch name for the machines which should convey nothing to the uninitiated, but be easily recognizable by those in the secret. "Landships" was one of the suggestions, but that gave away too much: the "Juggernaut Papers" was the name given to the files in one office. But the happiest suggestion was made by some general when one of the various methods of concealing their object was suggested to him. "Shall we just label them 'drinking water only'?" he was asked. "No, call them simply 'Tanks'"—and Tanks they were called, and have been ever since. The advantage of this name is that they look like ungainly tanks, and a good deal of talk was possible about a Tank Department, responsible for a large issue of drinking-water tanks for Mesopotamia, without letting out any secrets. When they first had to be sent by road or railway the Tanks were elaborately labelled, "For Mesopotamia, via Petrograd"—the latter word, with

subtle ingenuity, painted in large Russian characters. "Tanks," indeed, was the happiest possible name; it is curt and unpretentious, and has that quality of *meiosis*, characteristic of our race, of which the full subtlety was only appreciated when the devastating character of this harmlessly named machine appeared. It is a name which has now quite settled down, with its new significance, into the English language, and has even given a title to a new corps of the British Army.

One of the most critical operations was to deliver the machines at their camp, or, later, to send them off to France, without allowing them to be seen on the journey. The first Tank arrived at the camp by road, travelling only at night, and during the daytime resting under cover of a tarpaulin, and being strictly guarded. Later ones arrived by railway, a special siding having been made for them at the camp, and they were never unloaded except at night. The scene at the unloading must have been impressive: the siding, illuminated by flares, casting an unearthly light on the strange machines as, with their curious waddling gait, they stepped off the trucks specially adapted to their use and solemnly lumbered into the camp prepared for them.

The members of the Heavy Section of the Machine-gun Corps, after arriving at their camp, had a good deal of work in front of them before they could hope to take their Tanks on active service. They had to learn how to drive and steer them, to repair them, and to fire off their guns when boxed up within their narrow compass: they even had to learn how to live at all inside them. Imagine a narrow cabin some nine or ten feet wide, thirteen feet long and four feet high,

into which had to be crammed an engine of over 100 horse power, two guns and three or four machine-guns, provisions for three days, ammunition and equipment, besides a crew of several men. The noise of the engine made it impossible to hear an order, consequently every communication had to be made by signs; the armour-plating was so effective that one could only see for steering or for aiming the guns through the narrowest chinks; the motion, too, of the tank over rough ground was not unlike that of a ship in a heavy sea, and this motion, combined with the smell of oil, the close atmosphere, the heat and the noise were at first apt to induce the same symptoms as sometimes afflict those uninured to sea-voyages. To add to the difficulties of rapid training, the early Tanks were continually breaking down. This is hardly surprising considering that there was no previous practice to guide those responsible for their construction, and that hard use must inevitably reveal defects which could not have been foreseen in the constructional stages. Apart from such defects, new suggestions for improving their efficiency were constantly being made and tested, so that it cannot be said that the mechanism and equipment of the Tanks were even provisionally complete until the first machines went out to France.

Every facility, however, had been prepared at the new camp for the rapid training of the men. A section of the German and English trench systems, exactly copied from a part of the front in France, had been made with immense labour before the first detachments arrived. This section was about a mile wide and two miles deep, and reproduced three lines

of German trenches, as well as the gun positions in the rear and fifteen miles of communication trenches: there were shell craters and mine craters, and, to ensure greater accuracy, millions of sandbags and thousands of yards of barbed wire entanglements had been used. Practice butts for the guns and machine-guns had also been erected to enable the gunners to learn how to fire from the Tanks in motion.

The aim of the training was to make each of the men of a Tank crew capable of driving, steering, firing either sort of gun, and executing minor repairs. The time was somewhat short to train every man quite to that pitch, though, as a matter of fact, each man sent out very nearly attained the required standard. Obviously, it would have been useless with such small crews to have each man a specialist only at one of these jobs, otherwise in case of casualties the whole value of the Tank might have been neutralized. For larger repairs a section of the unit was specially trained, and mobile workshops for the purpose were constructed.

In spite of all these difficulties, so great was the zeal displayed that at the end of July, 1916, it was possible to hold two exhibition combats with Tanks over the trench system prepared, one before General Staff Officers, the other before the King. These exhibitions showed that the Tanks answered the purposes for which they had been designed, and orders were given for them to be made ready for France. At the end of August fifty Tanks were loaded at night on the railway at the camp's private siding and sent off to France, with all due precaution for secrecy. They were landed at Havre on August 29th,

and went up to the front, some by road, others by railway.

The Tanks sent out were painted all over, for the purpose of concealment, with weird colours, which added to their grotesque appearance. They were also given fancy names by the men, sometimes illustrated by rough heraldic emblems on the body. Among the names given were: His Majesty's Landships *Cyclops*, *Chaos*, *Café au Lait*, *Champagne*, *Cordon Rouge*, *Chartreuse*, *Chablis*, *Cognac*, *Curaçoa*, and *Crême de Menthe*. There was an H.M.L.S. *Dreadnought*, a *Daredevil*, and a *Deadwood Dick*. Some were named after Scottish clans: for example—H.M.L.S. *Clan Cameron*, *Clan Ruthven*, *Clan Gordon*, etc. A *Clan McKay* was proposed, but, as a dispute arose whether the proper spelling was *McKay* or *McKie*, a disagreeable controversy was averted by the substitution of *Clan McTavish*, the spelling of which was indisputable. One male Tank was named H.M.L.S. *Curate*, on the ground that it "assisted the *Vickers*" carried in its sister female Tank.

(3) *Tanks in Action*

When the Tanks arrived at the front they were naturally objects of wonder to all who were privileged to see them. Detachments of Tanks were assigned to the Army Commander then engaged in the continuation of the Somme offensive. He was so interested in their proceedings, and so anxious to discover their capabilities that, not only were they required to give him an exhibition of their qualities on the eve of battle, but he himself went as a passenger in one

of them. They passed through the tests imposed on them even more satisfactorily than in England, surmounting or traversing obstacles which had hitherto been hardly regarded as within the limits of their action. Accordingly, on the 15th September they were let loose for the test of battle.

The new offensive, which began on the 15th September, was a continuation of the great battle of the Somme that had started in the previous July. The object of this offensive was to drive the Germans out of some high ground running east and south of Thiepval, from which they could enfilade our newly gained positions. The chief points in the ridge were Mouquet Farm, Courcelette, Martinpuich and Flers. The Germans were strongly entrenched, and had hundreds of gigantic wasps' nests scattered about in the shape of strong concrete emplacements for machine-guns. Bitter experience had taught our generals that a successful advance under cover of our artillery barrage into the first line trenches was too often doomed to be hung up by the concentrated fire from these wasps' nests, which could not be reached by our infantry. The chief business of the Tanks was to help the infantry by destroying these nests. Only a few days had been available since the journey from the coast for the new machines to be brought to concert pitch for action. But all the crews had been working with determination to give their Tanks every chance of showing to the best advantage, and by the eventful day all was ready.

September 15th was a misty morning, and comparatively few of our troops saw the long line of Tanks, which the night before had been comfortably

tucked away in a secluded valley, deploying into battle position. Whispers there had been about some new "hush-hush" contrivance, and the Germans also apparently had some inkling of the new terror, as one of their army orders of the 14th was subsequently discovered alluding to "new engines of war, as cruel as effective." But, when the mists rose and the Tanks appeared to friend and foe in all their grotesque uncouthness, the effect was as exhilarating to us as it was dumbfounding to the Germans. The only objection to them from our point of view was that, as *Crême de Menthe* or *Cognac* were seen waddling ahead or alongside of our ranks, our infantrymen were so overcome with Homeric laughter at their ungainly antics that they almost had to stop from exhaustion. What the Germans felt is thus described in one of their own papers :—

"When the German outposts crept out of their dug-outs in the mist of the morning of September 16th, and stretched their necks to look for the English, their blood was chilled in their veins. Two mysterious monsters were crawling towards them over the craters. Stunned as if an earthquake had burst around them, they all rubbed their eyes, which were fascinated by the fabulous creatures. Their imaginations were still excited by the effects of the bombardment. It was no wonder, then, that imagination got the better of these sorely tried men, who knew well enough that the enemy would use every means to destroy our steel wall of fragile human bodies. These men no longer know what fear is. But here was some devilry which the brain of man had invented with powerful mechanical forces, a mystery which rooted one to the ground because the intelligence could not grasp it, a fate

before which one felt helpless. One stared and stared as if one had lost the power of one's limbs. The monsters approached us slowly, hobbling, rolling, and rocking, but they approached. Nothing impeded them, a supernatural force seemed to impel them on. Some one in the trenches said: 'The Devil is coming,' and the word was passed along the line like wild fire. Suddenly tongues of flame leaped out of the armoured sides of the iron caterpillar. Shells whistled over our heads, and the sound of machine-guns filled the air."

The Tanks' efficiency did not belie their appearance. When the Germans had recovered their senses sufficiently, they directed all the available rifle and machine-gun fire upon them. But the Tanks did not mind. A war-correspondent, describing the adventures of *Crême de Menthe* on the way to Courcelette, narrates that—

"the bullets fell from its sides harmlessly. It advanced upon a broken wall, leaned up against it heavily until it fell with a crash of bricks, and then rose on to the bricks and passed over them, and walked straight into the midst of factory ruins.

"From its sides came flashes of fire and a hose of bullets, and then it trampled around over machine-gun emplacements, 'having a grand time,' as one of the men said, with enthusiasm. It crushed the machine-guns under its heavy ribs, and killed machine-gun teams with a deadly fire. The infantry followed in and took the place after this good help, and then advanced again round the flanks of the monster."

"Gott in Himmel!" ejaculated the prisoners as they were led out of the village past the monster, then

resting peacefully. Of another Tank's exploits the following is an authentic account:—

"The first news of success came through from an airman's wireless, which said:—

"'A Tank is walking up the High Street of Flers, with the British Army cheering behind.'

"It was an actual fact. One of the motor monsters was there, enjoying itself thoroughly, and keeping down the heads of the enemy.

"It hung out a big piece of paper, on which were the words—

"'GREAT HUN DEFEAT. SPECIAL.'

"The aeroplane flew low over its carcase, machine-gunning the scared Germans, who flew before the monstrous apparition. Later in the day it seemed to have been in need of a rest before coming home, and two humans got out of its inside and walked back to our lines."

One Tank in another part of the field was in action for twenty consecutive hours. Another, getting well ahead of the infantry, on finding itself alone, turned back to see what had become of its human companions. They were found to be held up by a machine-gun emplacement full of Germans, so the Tank obligingly sat on the emplacement, shot down the Germans and led the men on to further victories. What the soldiers thought of them stands on record.

"'It was like a fairy tale!' said a Cockney boy. 'I can't help laughing every time I think of it.' He laughed then, though he had a broken arm and was covered in blood.

"'They broke down trees as if they were match-

sticks, and went over barricades like elephants. The Boches were thoroughly scared. They came running out of shell-holes and trenches, shouting like mad things.

"'Some of them attacked the Tanks and tried to bomb them, but it wasn't a bit of good. Oh, crikey! it was a rare treat to see. The biggest joke that ever was! They just stamped down the German dug-out as one might a wasps' nest.'"

What the Germans thought when they were at close quarters to the terror is also narrated:—

"From one dug-out came a German colonel, with a white, frightened face, who held his hands very high in front of the Tank, shouting, 'Kamerad! kamerad!'

"'Well, come inside, then,' said a voice in the body of the beast, and a human hand came forth from a hole opening suddenly and grabbed the German officer.

"For the rest of the day the Tank led that unfortunate man about on the strangest journey the world has ever seen. Another Tank was confronted with one hundred Germans, who shouted 'Mercy! mercy!' and, at the head of this procession, led them back as prisoners to our lines. Yet another Tank went off to the right of Martinpuich, and was so fresh and high-spirited that it went far into the enemy's lines, as though on the way to Berlin."

It must not, however, be imagined that the proceedings of the Tanks were quite as amusing to those inside as they appeared to the infantry, who had barbed wire levelled for them and machine-gun emplacements crushed as they advanced. The cramped

quarters, the head-splitting noise and the difficulty of ascertaining what was going on outside made the lives of the Tank crew anything but agreeable in battle. Their periscopes were apt to be shot away; the steering, never easy, became almost impossible. The mere manual labour of moving the levers of the engines and turning apparatus was enormous, especially in these early machines. The crew had difficulty in communicating with the outside world, and had to rely chiefly on two carrier pigeons taken with them on the voyage: as for communication with them by the outside world, this was even harder. The Tank, indeed, proved to be an admirable protection against ordinary rifle bullets. One of those present at this first engagement is still on view plastered almost all over with the bullets fired at its pachydermatous hide, which still remains unpierced. But a direct hit by a heavy shell was almost fatal. It is true that the danger of this was small, even with the slow pace of about three miles an hour of the early Tanks, for they did not rise high from the ground, and were well protected by their colouring. But when one of them got stuck or overturned, as sometimes happened, the German gunners had leisure to find their range, and were sometimes successful in knocking them out.

There is no doubt that the element of surprise had much to do with the extraordinary success of the Tanks on their first appearance. They gave that extra dose of exhilaration to our men which is so useful in the offensive, and helped, by their unexpected appearance, to depress the *morale* of the Germans. But their achievements proved that they had

more solid qualities besides the gift of surprise. They were shown to have the power of destroying machine-gun emplacements, of dealing with enemy personnel, and, above all, of flattening out a broad way for the infantry through the deadly wire entanglements. Incidentally, too, by offering a better mark than the infantry, they often diverted the enemy's rifle and shell fire from the men to themselves, and helped to give the assaulting lines confidence. Even when the Tanks themselves were knocked out, this was not necessarily fatal to the crews, who often managed to escape, so that the casualties were small in proportion to the number of Tanks put out of action. Those who inaugurated Tank tactics in this first battle deserve all the credit they can receive. They had had comparatively little training in their special task, and, taken all in all, were little more than enthusiastic amateurs; and it was no light undertaking to experiment, as they did, with a machine hitherto untried in war, in the face of dangers, some of which were, from the outset, unpleasantly obvious, while many others, though unknown, were to be expected. But every man in the section was an enthusiast, proud of the surprise he was going to show his friend and foe for the first time, and determined to make the Tank a success. All honour, therefore, to the brave men who for the first time went down into the shell holes in Tanks and proved the value of the new Landships.

Once having proved their value, the Tanks came to stay. Later in the year Tanks were sent out to Egypt, and were in action at Gaza. In November they were used again in France. One day two of them were sent to attack an isolated strong point.

They came within fifty yards' range of it, knocked out the gun emplacements, and then proceeded to enfilade the trenches. At this point both Tanks were ditched just when the enemy held up the white flag. Nevertheless, the officers and crews, after leaving one machine-gunner to cover them, went into the German trenches; within an hour the twelve of them coaxed out of the dug-outs no less than four hundred German prisoners, who were safely escorted to the rear by the infantry. Four days later a single Tank, though attacked at one time by thirty bombers, caused great havoc in the enemy trenches, dealt with several machine-guns, dispersed a bunch of twenty-five pack mules, and returned home triumphantly after its solitary excursion, lasting two and a half hours.

Meanwhile, more and more Tanks were being constructed, and an increasing personnel to form the crews and the repair-sections were being trained in England. After the first success in France the growing importance of the organization was emphasized by a change of title from "Heavy Section" to "Heavy Branch of the Machine-gun Corps." The original secret camp had no accommodation for winter training, so in October a move was made to another large hutted camp, which was entirely annexed by the Branch in November. Great care was exercised in selecting men for the service: good eyesight, good muscles and mechanical aptitude were required, and, above all, a high standard of intelligence; since, whether as mechanics, or still more as members of a Tank crew, very great personal initiative and nerve is needed in every individual of the Branch. Finally, in July, 1917, the growing size and importance of the

Tanks organization justified the Army Council in entirely separating it from the Machine-gun Corps and establishing it as a special Tank Corps by itself, under a Director-General.

In France the Tanks have been in action in successively increasing numbers at each attack delivered on a large scale. At Arras in April, at Messines in June, and at the third battle of Ypres in August they have continued their valuable work. They naturally have not enjoyed the advantages of surprise, so useful in their first engagement, and it could not be expected that a vigilant enemy like the Germans would not contrive counter-measures. They have now established special observers and aeroplanes to watch for Tanks and signal their appearance, and guns both in the rear and in the trenches to deal with them. Armour-piercing bullets are served out to their riflemen and machine-gunners for use at close quarters, and elaborately concealed Tank-traps are prepared to engulph the monsters. But although these measures have had some success, and the Germans in public now profess to deride Tanks, our own counter-measures to these devices, and improvements in the design and construction of Tanks, have helped to neutralize them; indeed, the action of Tanks in recent battles seems to indicate that the Germans' is only an assumed contempt.

A few reports of Tank actions during this year will give some idea of their continued value. In an account of the capture of one strong village near Arras it is stated that one solitary Tank, though unsupported and attacked by heavy machine-gun fire, and having five of its small crew wounded,

silenced the German machine-guns, and made it possible for the infantry to secure the objective. Another Tank had its commanding officer wounded early in the day; after he had been evacuated, the serjeant took charge. Then the Tank overtook the infantry, held up by machine-gun fire in the first line German trenches: advancing to the second line, it knocked out the machine-guns and allowed the infantry to advance. After capturing or killing eighty Germans, it went through a German strong point and enabled the infantry to consolidate themselves 300 yards further on. Most of its ammunition being then exhausted, the Tank returned as far as its petrol would carry it.

It is noteworthy, too, that with all its mechanical power of crushing down opposition and its comparative immunity from certain forms of attack, the Tank, like every other engine or weapon of war, depends for its success entirely on the human element. It was at first thought when the power-loom was introduced that the human factor would be largely eliminated from the weaving industry: so far was this from being the case that the power-loom vastly increased the number of human beings employed in the trade, and made their co-operation more important than ever. So with Tanks: their success depends entirely on the spirit with which their crews affront the perils of their uneasy voyages. How far their spirit can carry them is shown in all the records of the new corps. "The action of the members of one of the Tanks," writes a general officer, "who carried out repairs standing on the top of the Tank while it was under concentrated fire from five guns, and carried

out their work as intrepidly as though they had been ten miles in rear of the line, is only characteristic of the whole work of the whole lot."

It is hardly possible yet to allocate all the credit for the hard and persistent work carried out by the pioneers of this corps. Like all pioneers who have achieved any reform in the British Army or elsewhere, they had faith, and their faith helped them sometimes against indifference—sometimes, too, against active opposition to their new idea. But even if they cannot yet be named, they have the satisfaction of having helped to save the lives of hundreds of brave men, and perhaps to have brought nearer the final victory. It has been truly said that we were first this time in inventing a new engine of war—an engine at once effective, and at the same time, unlike so many of the German inventions, transgressing none of the hitherto accepted conventions of war.

CHAPTER XV

THE WOMEN'S ARMY AUXILIARY CORPS

§ 1.—*The Women's Legion*

BEFORE this war the only quasi-military sphere for which women were thought eligible was nursing the sick and wounded. Even that privilege was vehemently contested, and it is barely sixty years ago since Florence Nightingale won for her sex liberty to perform that service for their country. For long the recognition was somewhat grudging, and there was very little peace time organization of women nurses for the emergency of war. But during the interval between the South African War and 1914 a great step was taken towards the recognition of women's duties and privileges in this sphere. In 1902 Queen Alexandra's Military Nursing Service was established, and subsequently, in connection with the Territorial Force, the Territorial Force Nursing Service and Voluntary Aid Detachments, both of which were liable to be called upon for active nursing service on the outbreak of war, were sanctioned. The work achieved in this war by these nursing organizations of women deserves a chapter to itself; our concern in this chapter is with some of the other activities by which women have directly contributed to the efficiency of our armies in the field and at home.

It is not unnatural that women should have demanded a more active part in this war than it was previously thought possible for them to play in military operations. For it differs from any previously waged by this country in its call on the whole population instead of on a comparatively small section of fighting men. It is a war in which not only every man capable of fighting is needed to face Germans, Bulgars, Turks or Austrians in some quarter of the globe, but in which the energies of every remaining individual of the population are needed to grow food, to make munitions of war, to keep up our shipping, to maintain civil industries as far as possible and generally to preserve all that we value in our country and that makes it worth fighting for. Naturally, the chief consideration in war time is to secure that all these other necessary activities of the country should interfere as little as possible with the despatch to the front of all men able to stand the strain of fighting. To make this possible, not only men above military age or otherwise disqualified for active service, but also women are needed to take a larger part in the normal industries of the nation than was the case previously.

Women have freely responded to the call for assistance in civil work, where men only were previously employed. In the making of munitions they have long been doing work of which few had previously thought them capable : they have undertaken employment as postmen, grooms, drivers, gardeners, agricultural labourers, bakers, window-cleaners, mechanics, and especially as clerks, secretaries and typists. But all this has not satisfied them. There are many employments in connection with the army

itself which they felt as capable of performing as men, and whereby they would be able to release more men from auxiliary occupations to places in the trenches and the firing line.

The Army itself has gradually cast aside its masculine traditions, and, after first allowing, has gradually come to welcome the help offered by women in jobs hitherto thought altogether outside their province. The increase of lady typists, clerks and secretaries in the War Office alone is significant. In four directorates, for example, where no women were employed before the war, over 1200 women are now working at typing and clerical work. Altogether only 156 women were employed in the War Office in July, 1914; by the end of 1916 this number had risen to 5500, or, including the cable and postal censorship department, which did not exist before the war, to nearly 7700. From a very early period in the war women were enlisted as clerks in recruiting offices, after many hundreds of them, by voluntary service, had shown their aptitude for this kind of work. Before the war the work in regimental Record Offices throughout the country was entirely performed by soldier clerks; as early as April, 1915, however, an instruction was issued stating that there would be "no general objection to employing a certain proportion of women in each office," in order to release men for military service and give employment to women out of work, and the practice of employing them was soon universally adopted. The National Union of Women Workers of Great Britain and Ireland, realizing the dangers due to the establishment of large Army camps, organized a system of women

patrols to safeguard young girls in their vicinity. The organization proved so great a success that in March, 1915, the War Office recognized the patrols and welcomed their help, periodically issuing lists of military centres where they were at work.

For the first year of the war the work of women in connection with the Army was chiefly confined to nursing, typing and clerical dutes, and in those spheres they had already released a great many men for more active service. But many women felt there was still much they could do to help the Army. One of the troubles with the New Armies was the inefficiency of the cooking arrangements. Hitherto, it had always been considered essential, at home as well as abroad, to draw regimental cooks from the strength of the unit, if for no other reason because on active service men must rely on their own resources for cooking their food, and should therefore be trained in cooking beforehand. But the circumstances of 1915 were quite abnormal. Owing to the inexperience of most soldiers in the New Armies and the almost entire absence of cooks trained at the Army School of Cookery, the food in a large number of units, though always plentiful and good, was badly cooked and badly served, and the cook-houses were often dirty and slovenly. In consequence, at a time when the young soldiers especially needed appetizing food to strengthen them for their unwonted labours, many suffered a great deal of hardship from the monotonous and indigestible meals put before them; moreover, there was a great deal of waste. Women who heard of these defects, or were allowed a glimpse of some regimental cook-houses, felt that here was a province

in which they could justly claim pre-eminence and might introduce improvements. There were many camps, too, such as training centres, rest camps and convalescent camps, to which the argument about training the men for field cookery did not apply; and even for the others women might profitably help with instruction.

From the idea that women might help in cooking for the Army sprang the idea of a Women's Legion. Several ladies interested in women's work started this organization primarily with the idea of supplying women cooks and domestic servants, who should help—

(*a*) to release men from work which women could do;
(*b*) to improve the cooking and cleaning of the camps;
(*c*) to introduce economies in the feeding of the men.

The Army authorities were approached with the proposal, and agreed to make some experiments in convalescent camps, where the cooking and other services had to be performed by men taken from active service units. The first recruits for the Women's Legion were obtained by the ordinary methods of engaging domestic servants, and on August 3rd, 1915 Miss Barker took the first party of twenty of the Women's Legion cooks to the convalescent camp at Dartford. Here there were several kitchens, one of which was handed over entirely to the women, who claim to have introduced a new standard of cleanliness and good cooking useful as an example to the other

kitchens. At any rate, the experiment was so far approved that three weeks later a band of sixty cooks from the Legion were sent to Eastbourne convalescent camp, where they immediately released sixty men, who had hitherto been doing the work; a fortnight later twenty more were sent to Epsom.

Thenceforward the value of women as cooks, etc., in convalescent camps and hospitals, at any rate, was never questioned. For hospitals, the provision of cooks and general service women was left to the Voluntary Aid Detachments, while convalescent homes were catered for by the Women's Legion. Early in January, 1916, an Army Council Instruction laid down the conditions of service for women recruited for the hospitals by the V.A.D., and at the end of February another defined the position of the Women's Legion cooks in the convalescent homes. The latter were all to be engaged by the Women's Legion cookery section, which had been given an office at the Duke of York's School, to be under the orders of the officer commanding the camp, to sign an agreement to serve for twelve months or the duration of the war, whichever was less, and to receive wages of £20 a year, with food and lodging as well as a grant for uniform. This uniform, a neat brown skirt and jacket, with a soft felt hat, has now become a familiar sight throughout the country.

Shortly after the publication of this Instruction the scope of this section of the Women's Legion was still further extended. Hitherto, it had not been thought advisable to employ women in camps conducted under active service conditions; but in April, 1916, a considerable innovation was made to meet a special

difficulty. For some time a large instructional camp in the Midlands had found itself in great difficulty for the supply of cooks and employed men. A newly formed corps was being trained there, and the men sent for training could not be spared for cooking and waiting, while the supply of men of low physical categories available for such employment was very limited. Among other needs for service was that for a huge mess with accommodation for 500 officers. In this difficulty recourse was had to the Women's Legion, who forthwith sent down a staff of cooks and waitresses to cater for this mess. Two months later the experiment was extended to a large camp in the south of England, and, in July, 1916, the Army Council sanctioned the employment of cooks and waitresses of the Women's Legion in all officers' messes where men of low physical categories could thereby be released for other employments.

Altogether, the Women's Legion have now provided over 6000 cooks and waitresses in no less than 200 camps in the United Kingdom, chiefly for officers' and serjeants' messes and for cadet battalions. Recently, too, they have taken over the service for Canadian and Australian hospitals, where their efficiency and the economy they have introduced have been especially marked. Instructresses in cookery have also been supplied by the Legion for some of the Command Schools of Cookery. One of the secrets of the success which has everywhere attended their efforts lies in the fact that, besides the working cooks and waitresses, all grades are thoroughly practical women, who have been through the mill themselves. Mrs. Leach, now at the head of the cookery section, herself

started work in the Legion by learning cookery, before she took charge of two hundred cooks in a convalescent home: and all the superintendents, some with three years' training in domestic science, cookery and laundry work, and several with a university education, have had to begin their career in the Legion as assistant cooks. Some of them, of course, rise quickly: for example, there is a girl of twenty-two who is responsible for the whole service of a rest camp of 22,000 men. In many instances the economy resulting from the use of women has been extraordinary. Largely owing to this, at one mess the daily messing charge for officers was reduced within a few weeks from 2*s.* 6*d.* to 1*s.* 3*d.* a head, and, in addition, £100 was saved for the benefit of the mess generally; now, at the same mess, the charge has been reduced to 9*d.* a day.[1] At another large mess, where the weekly loss had previously been at the rate of £100 a week, the messing charge has been considerably reduced. In January, 1917, the Army Council recognized this good work by a rise in wages. "In view of the valuable services rendered by the women cooks, waitresses and housemaids supplied by the Women's Legion," says the Instruction, the wages were raised from £20 to £26 per annum for the lowest grade. At the same time the office expenses allowed to the Legion headquarters from public funds were considerably increased.

Another reason for the marked success of the ex-

[1] These sums are of course in addition to the free rations or allowance in lieu thereof allowed to each officer: the total cost per head for each officer who had to pay 9*d.* was therefore about 2*s.* 6*d.* a day.

periment is no doubt the great attention that has always been paid to the women's welfare. The difficulty of housing and making comfortable a large number of women in or near a camp of soldiers has been overcome with success, partly owing to the care devoted by the Army authorities to this important matter, partly to the careful supervision exercised by all grades of the Legion over the well-being of their subordinates.

The Women's Legion has not confined itself to cooks and waitresses. Besides help provided for the Ministry of Munitions, canteens and agriculture, a Motor Transport section, under Miss Ellis, has been able to find women to replace men as drivers for the Army Service Corps and the Royal Flying Corps. This was an even greater innovation than that of employing women as Army cooks, for not only were women motor-drivers unheard of in the Army before the war, but they were extremely rare in civil life. The way in which hundreds of women have trained themselves for a profession which requires considerable courage and nerve and entails hard work in all weathers, is one of the many indications of women's eagerness to help their brothers in this great war. The experiment of employing them to drive Army motors was at first tried on a small scale; then, in February, 1917, the experiment was sanctioned by an Army Council Instruction, which laid down the hours of work, rates of pay and general conditions of service for superintendents, head-drivers, mechanic drivers and garage washers. Now it is almost more common to see a woman than a man driving one of the motor-cars in use by the War Office or at some

military headquarters. Altogether some 400 have found work in this way, and have released nearly half a battalion of men for other work, and the number is steadily increasing.

§ 2.—*The Women's Army Auxiliary Corps*

Up to April of this year, the employment of women with the Army had been solely confined to England. But at the beginning of the year an officer had been sent to France to report generally on questions of labour supply for the Army and on economizing man-power, in order to secure the largest possible number of able-bodied men for the fighting line. As a result, amongst other recommendations, the employment of women was strongly urged. In prefacing his general remarks on this suggestion, he paid the following striking tribute to the success of the experiment at home :—

"In the last year or more in England the employment of women has developed to an immense extent, and has been attended with remarkable success. Women have taken up various forms of male employment, which by many had been deemed impossible for the sex. They have found their way into work in all branches of life and have proved their capacity for it.

"In the Army at home the success has been conspicuous, and women are to be found in numerous offices, and cooking in many of the Home Military Establishments. Results have shown that the sex difficulty has not been anything like what some have predicted. The women have been hard at work, and

felt they were out for the job, and the men have respected them and experience at home has been, I understand, almost unanimous in this respect."

The functions which, in his opinion, could be usefully performed by women in France were as follows: ambulance and motor-car drivers, clerks in various offices, storewomen, checkers, telegraphists, telephone operators, postal employees, orderlies, cooks and domestic servants. Women employed abroad would naturally be confined to bases and places of safety on Lines of Communication far from the firing line.

The main difficulty lay in the question of quarters. It was essential that no women should be employed until suitable quarters for them could be found. Accommodation in France had been prepared solely in accordance with the requirements of the troops, and modifications and adaptations for the use of women required careful consideration.

Several conferences were held, and eventually it was decided, in principle, that women should be employed in substitution for soldiers in certain occupations at the Bases and on the Lines of Communication in France. An Army Council Instruction was issued accordingly, authorizing the employment of women of the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps for these purposes.

Meanwhile, it was felt that a comprehensive scheme for the employment of women in certain occupations in the Army, both at home and in France, was becoming a matter of urgent necessity. The problem of co-ordinating and extending the various existing organizations was not an easy one, and needed close

examination. Every aspect of the problem was carefully considered, and the full charter for the organization of the W.A.A.C. was finally completed at the end of June.

The release of men for other purposes is treated as the whole object of women's employment; they are to be substituted, roughly speaking, in the ratio of four women to three men. The main categories of employment are laid down as those of clerks and typists, cooks and domestic servants, motor drivers, storekeepers, tailors, bakers, shoemakers and messengers, telephonists and postal servants, technical women for the R.F.C. and A.S.C., and miscellaneous, a category which includes printers, gardeners (for graves) and grooms: these various employments are classified into four sections—Cookery, Mechanical, Clerical and Miscellaneous. The rates of pay for the various categories are laid down in this and subsequent Instructions: cooks and those engaged in domestic service receive £26 (scrubbers £20) per annum, and are entitled to free board and lodging; the other categories are engaged at weekly wages varying from 20*s.* a week for unskilled labour to 42*s.* for the most highly skilled; the women in these categories have a deduction of 14*s.* a week, for board and lodging, if they live in Government hostels: higher rates of pay are, of course, given to forewomen and the higher grades of the corps. Under the terms of the agreement to be signed by each member on joining the corps she is bound to serve, if required, for a year or the duration of the war, whichever is the greater period, and to declare whether she is willing to serve at home only, or at home or abroad, and she engages

to submit to proper discipline. Annual grants are made for uniforms for all members of the corps proceeding overseas and for those at home working in camps or barracks.

The uniform allowance provides the women with a serviceable outfit, consisting of a great-coat of Army pattern, a khaki-coloured coat-frock, stockings, shoes, leggings, and brown felt hat. The higher grades wear a khaki coat and skirt.

Shoulder straps, inset with colour, denote the various sections—blue for those on the Headquarters, orange for the Administrators, green for Recruiting Controllers. Members of the Domestic Section have scarlet shoulder straps; Clerical—brown; Mechanical —claret; Miscellaneous—purple.

The Badge of the corps is a laurel wreath, surrounding the initials W.A.A.C. This badge is worn by all women in the corps. Members of the Women's Legion (Motor and Cookery), who enrol in the W.A.A.C., are permitted to wear, in addition, the badge of the Women's Legion on the lapel of the coat. The approved badges to indicate the various grades of Controller, Administrator, etc., consist of a rose and a fleur-de-lis on the shoulder strap, varying in arrangement according to the grade of the Administrator, the Chief Controller having a *double Rose*. The forewomen of the corps are denoted by a laurel wreath on the upper arm.

In case of sickness or injury, at home members of the corps are subject to the Insurance Act, abroad they are entitled to free medical treatment: in both cases full pay is continued for three months, and subsequently at a reduced rate. For disciplinary purposes,

members of the W.A.A.C. during working hours are subject to the orders of the Officer Commanding the Unit to which they are attached for duty, and at other times to Administrators of the corps of their own sex. At the head of the corps is a Chief Controller, and under her a Deputy Controller and heads of each of the four sections; overseas there is another Chief Controller, also with a Deputy. Area Controllers supervise the arrangements for the corps in districts at home and abroad; and each hostel, according to its size, has an Administrator, or Assistant Administrator, who is responsible for the arrangements and the discipline and welfare of the women in her hostel.

Overseas, all women are housed in Government hostels, which take the form either of hired buildings or hutments: at home, except in the case of the Cookery Section, they may lodge at their homes if these are in proximity to their work; otherwise, accommodation is found for them in hostels. Members of the Cookery and Motor Transport sections of the Women's Legion already working for the Army will be gradually absorbed into the W.A.A.C., but may retain any advantages given to them by their previous rates of pay.

This Army Council Instruction, for the first time, brought the women working for the Army, both at home and abroad, into one corps. Those at home will, for all practical purposes, be doing the same work which some of them have been already doing for over a year, and though some changes of organization, method of recruiting and hostel accommodation will result from the new arrangements, there will be

no great change from the system already described under the heading, *The Women's Legion.*

The overseas experiment is the chief innovation: there, too, it has already been working for more than three months, so that it is already possible to say something of its success.

When it was decided to employ women in France, the essential question of finding suitable accommodation was at once taken in hand. Naturally, their hostels and camps had to be self-contained, within reasonably easy distance from the places of employment; and a somewhat higher standard of comfort was required than for the men. However, the military authorities co-operated with the ladies sent to secure quarters for the corps, and preliminary arrangements were so rapidly carried out that it was possible to dispatch the first party of women at the end of April. At present the quarters are found principally in hutted camps, and also in hostels taken over by the corps at some of the bases. These quarters can accommodate numbers from 28 to 500, and already accommodation has been arranged for over 4000 women to be employed by the Army in France.

Each hostel or hutted camp, however small, is under the charge of an administrator responsible for the comfort and well-being of the inmates and for their discipline outside office hours. These administrators, varying in grade from administrators and deputy administrators to unit administrators according to the size of the hostel, are all carefully chosen for their training and experience. Those selected for these important posts comprise house mistresses and house-

keepers in schools and large institutions, women trained in welfare work, superintendents of hostels organized by the Ministry of Munitions, University women, and those who have gained experience in canteens and girls' clubs; and the qualities chiefly sought in them is that they should have been used to dealing with girls, have helped to organize games and women's work, and, above all, that they should have tact and strength of character. In order to fit them better for their special work, all the administrators, as well as the higher grades of area administrators and controllers, receive instruction before being sent out to take up their duties. The course includes lectures on organization and administration, accounts and rations, insurance, travelling, hostel equipment, official returns, reports and correspondence and hygiene, and they are required to visit Army Record Offices and W.A.A.C. hostels already established in England.

A great deal of the success of the experiment must depend on the tact and personal influence of these administrators. For the women of the W.A.A.C. cannot be treated as children; they are carefully chosen in the first instance, and are doing responsible work. For this reason a great deal of liberty is wisely given to them, and the rules and regulations are not unnecessarily stringent. The members of the corps must wear their uniform on all occasions; there are certain restrictions regarding admission to cafés and *estaminets* in France, but the administrator may sanction invitations to men to the public recreation rooms of the hostel. There are occasional roll-calls at the hostels, but out of office hours the women are

allowed a great deal of liberty. Thus, it will be seen, the idea is that they should be led, not driven, and that much depends on the administrator who acts as leader, still more on the manner in which the individual members respond to the trust reposed in them by upholding their personal credit and the honour of the corps. It says well for the success of the system that, after an experiment of nearly three months in France, only three girls had been returned to England, and they for an act which showed more stupidity than deliberate indiscipline.

The method of recruiting for the W.A.A.C. is as follows. General Headquarters in France, or the generals in command of Home Districts, periodically inform the War Office of the numbers of women required to replace men in stated occupations. Recruits for the corps are then obtained through the agency of the Employment Department of the Ministry of Labour. Candidates are selected from the recruits presenting themselves by a Selection Board presided over by the local Recruiting Controller of the W.A.A.C. References, of which applicants must give at least two, are examined by this Selection Board; and when a certain number of suitable candidates have been selected, a Medical Board, composed of three medical women, examines them for their physical fitness. Candidates selected by the Board and found medically fit are called up to a receiving depôt, after a short time allowed them for making preparations and giving notice to former employers. This time varies according to the accommodation available at receiving hostels, and in the past there has been some dissatisfaction at delays in

calling up approved candidates: now, however, that the number of such hostels has been increased, such delays are not likely to recur.

Candidates for posts in France, on arriving at the hostel, are first solemnly enrolled in the corps and sign their agreement before a military officer. They stay at the hostel about three weeks, during which they are inoculated and vaccinated, fitted with uniform and taught some elementary marching drill; they are also given a few addresses by senior officials of the corps on their duties and privileges. These three weeks are very valuable, as the women have a chance of making friends with their future associates in work and leisure; they learn to feel a pride in the corps and to understand something of the importance of their duties. From the outset the fine spirit, in which those volunteering for service envisaged their work, was manifest. One example of this will suffice. When the first batch of recruits came to take possession of the Connaught Club hostel, they were told that the beds had not yet arrived, as a sudden demand had arisen from the hospitals, and that they would have to sleep on straw-filled mattresses stretched over planks. Not a murmur was heard, although vaccination and inoculation soon gave aches and pains to several of them; on the contrary, they rejoiced in the temporary discomfort, since they felt that they were thereby helping the men in hospital, and were thus already doing something for the Army they had come to assist.[1]

One notable feature of these hostels is that all women of the corps below the grade correspond-

[1] This was only a temporary measure. The beds have now arrived.

ing to Army officers are treated in exactly the same way. There is thus no feeling of class distinction, and the cook earning £26 a year is, for the social purposes of the corps, on an equality with the shorthand typist who earns 37*s*. 6*d*. (39*s*. 6*d*. in London) a week. This principle applies equally in France. Naturally, every endeavour is made to allow friends to be together as much as possible; but throughout the spirit of equality of service according to capacity is maintained in the corps.

Periodically, parties of from thirty to sixty are made up, from those who have completed three weeks' attendance at the depôt hostel, to proceed to France. Parties must always, of course, be arranged in accordance with the available supply of accommodation and the nature of the work required, and one of the difficulties is that with every contingent of clerks, typists, storewomen, etc., there must be a certain proportion of women to do the service in the hostel to which they are drafted. Hardly a word of dissatisfaction and many expressions of praise have been sent over from France as to the work done by the women of the corps who have already joined the British Expeditionary Force.

Even more convincing as to the success of the experiment are the letters relating their own experiences, which have been received from the women themselves. It is worth while giving copious extracts from these letters, since nothing could be more reassuring to the friends of those who have gone overseas, or to all who have devoted themselves to the success of this great venture.

Here is a note from one of the first contingent to go out :—

"Needless to say, not one of us eighteen girls would do anything knowingly to bring down the good name of the D. of F. W.A.A.C. unit, and we are certainly very proud of being the first unit to come out."

Here are the thoughts of a storewoman :—

"We had Mrs. —— to speak to us last evening, and she gave us a lecture on upholding the honour of the corps, but I really think we are upholding that honour. —— and myself have started in the stores at a remount camp about half an hour's walk from the hostel. It is mostly dealing with harness and men's clothing. When the men go up to the trenches, we fit them up with kit, and the horses with harness. To-day a whole lot of harness was returned to stores, and —— and —— and myself had to check it, with the Major, who is an elderly man, watching us. . . .

"We have a barrier to keep the men who come for clothes out of the store, and the second morning I was giving out boots a serjeant came round the barrier, so I promptly informed him the other side for inquiries. He looked very surprised, but went. I expect he thought, It is only a girl there, it does not matter; but he found his mistake out.

"This life is worth a great many inoculations, and that is saying something."

Among the most delightful incidents recorded is the welcome given to the women by the men they were sent out to supersede. One girl writes :—

"What we all appreciate so much is the cheerful welcome the 'Boys' have given us. They are frankly

glad to have us, and we were afraid we would be unpopular on account of turning them out of their jobs; but there is no such feeling."

Another can hardly contain her enthusiasm at the reception she and her friends met:—

"At the Hôtel de Commerce, W.A.A.C. Hostel, we had an excellent supper, with fresh white bread, and were, furthermore, almost pressed to have a second helping of the most delectable stew which was served to us. As far as we were able to ascertain, nobody at the Hôtel de Commerce or anywhere else in Boulogne has ever entertained the faintest interest in baths or even having a wash. All such luxuries have had to be instituted by our authorities. Electric light has also been fitted up. No doubt you will have an accurate description of the chandelier in the dining-room. . . .

"To-day we reached our destination. . . . When we finally got here, we were indeed amazed. The men have provided every luxury you can conceive. They had put flowers in our mess and recreation room. We have heaps of comfy chairs also. We sit six at each table. We have white tablecloths, and crockery with a sweet blue pattern on it. Our recreation hut is a veritable lounge. It has a clock and little table and long lie-down arm-chairs. The floors are covered with linoleum. The officers who came to inspect them said, 'Oh, some pictures would look nice; and wouldn't you like some curtains?' When we waxed gratefully enthusiastic, they said modestly, 'Well, they do look all right. Quite dry, I should think.' The Tommies who actually got them ready said, 'Well, we shouldn't like to see our sisters roughing it. . . .

"We are the only girls for five miles round, and the men tell us that all the talent is to turn out and give

us a welcoming party during the week. We are to start work to-morrow. We feel that we shall have to expend the last spasm of energy for the rest of our lives, if necessary, to make up to the men for their kindness to us. In fact, we feel almost swindled; inasmuch as we were definitely promised hardships, but so far have been able to discover absolutely none."

Another says:—

"The office is in a lovely place, with a garden in front, and out of our windows you can see bushes of roses. It is very pleasant indeed, and I very much appreciate the kindness of the men who are instructing us. They take our coming here to help in a right spirit, and help us all they can. The girls seem to be settling down splendidly. The Englishmen seem to look up to us here, and I trust the members of the W.A.A.C. will strive to keep up to the standard.

"Everything is done to make us comfortable and happy, and in my opinion we are very fortunate in having such a good hostel, and plenty of good food, which I thoroughly enjoy."

In the following letters glimpses are afforded of the general conditions of work and play; some of the conditions, no doubt, are rough, but that was expected, and not resented, by the women who have undertaken this work. For example, here are the experiences of one draft:—

"The original B2 draft, through some mistake, had rather a sorry time on arrival, nothing having been prepared for them. They had to put up at a hotel that had not been opened for four years, and their first day was spent in scouring the place from top to

bottom. To hear them talk of it, one would think it was a huge joke, and the splendid way in which all made the best of the situation was simply splendid, and calls for nothing but praise."

Another girl writes:—

"We are billeted in empty villages, and everything is done for our comfort. Army blankets and no sheets are just a wee bit peculiar at first, but all idea of the latter is vanished from our minds, and we are developing an affection for our nice warm covering. . . .

"The restrictions are not at all formidable. In fact, we are allowed more liberty than I personally expected, which is saying a great deal. . . .

"Army rations may be a little rougher than the food one has been used to, but the quality is good and the quantity, and hunger is the best of sauces. . . .

"The work is interesting, and we really feel as if our 'little bit' will really count this time."

The work, indeed, proves to be very interesting, and all seem keen to make the best of work and play. Here is a girl's account of her daily routine.

"We are all keen on our work, and the hours are quite short. We have breakfast at 7.30 a.m. (a few of the Stores clerks have it a little earlier), and parade at 8.15 a.m. We march down to the offices and commence work about 9 a.m. We leave again at 1.45. We finish at 5 p.m. for the day. I was glad to hear that we were the nearest Camp to the line. The work at this base, therefore, is the most important, and I have found it very interesting indeed. Every one else seems equally pleased about it. . . . I think the girls will be glad to hear that we are free to go out from teatime till 9 o'clock roll-call. This makes a delightful long evening for us."

But the free time is well employed, as the same girl writes :—

"Two of us went out on Sunday and tried our French, which, to our great surprise, was understood by the Frenchwoman. We are now studying hard at it, and are also getting up a shorthand speed class. The Army is developing us already."

Finally, here is a quotation from the letter of a girl who typifies the fine spirit of work and adventure in which these brave women have undertaken their task :—

"We've dropped in most lucky, for it is an ideal little village right on the coast, and right in the midst of beautiful scenery and the most glorious stretch of sea, and, with such advantages as these, we feel that we are absolutely in clover, because we had expected a lot of hardships, and, instead, we have only inconvenience. . . .

"With regard to our life in billets, being 'army,' of course, it is very crude, and we have dispensed with such luxuries as tablecloths, etc.; but we have delicious white bread and white sugar. We get a lot of bully beef, and so far I haven't risked my teeth on the army biscuits, because I've only six good ones, which I am anxious to preserve until after the war. As we get night duty, being telegraphists, we are billeted in a small house apart from the rest, because of getting sleep in the daytime—a concession that we much appreciate. We have a bathing parade at 6.30 every morning, and get on 'swimmingly.' It sounds like a summer holiday, doesn't it? But, of course, it is not all pleasure out here, and my advice to the girls at Connaught Club is, 'Don't come out here expecting a picnic, because you won't get it.' Those of us who

are content with our lot, came out with the sole motive of 'doing our bit,' and with the determination to make the best of our lot. Whenever we feel inclined to grumble at certain things, we think of the men in the trenches, and we feel that these sink into insignificance by the side of the sacrifices they are making —we must always keep that thought before us. Stick it, girls, right to the end, and with the same noble spirit as they are showing; and remember that we shall share, in no small measure, the honour of those who have taken a more active part in bringing the victory."

PART IV

THE PROBLEM OF THE WOUNDED AND THE WIDOWS

CHAPTER XVI

PENSIONS

Date obolum Belisario

§ 1.—*Historical Summary*

Civilized governments have always recognized the duty of providing for soldiers disabled in their country's wars; but the extent to which this principle has been interpreted in practice has varied very considerably. Great military empires, like that of the Romans, whose existence depended on constant wars of defence, have invariably given practical recognition to the principle, if for no other reason than that the promise of an adequate provision for old age or a state of disablement is one of the best inducements to a high type of soldier to enrol in a permanent army. With the Romans a favourite method of provision for the veteran legionaries was by grants of land on the confines of the empire, where they and their families could settle. Two objects were thus served, a livelihood for the discharged soldier and his family, and a ring of settlers likely to prove the best defence against an assault by the outer barbarians. In more modern times it is significant that the first notable provision for disabled soldiers was made by Louis XIV almost at the outset of his career of glory and aggressive wars, when the need of first-rate armies was

indispensable for his objects. In 1670 the monarch founded the Hôtel des Invalides as a home for maimed and indigent veterans.

Hitherto the most striking example of generous policy to those who have fought and suffered for their country is afforded by the United States of America. Here the tradition was established in the earliest days of New England, when the constant danger of inroads and massacres by the Indians could only be averted by the able-bodied settlers' own courage and vigilance; ever since it has been consistently upheld. In 1636 the Plymouth Pilgrims enacted that any man sent forth as a soldier and returned maimed should be maintained competently by the Colony during his lifetime. Similar provisions were enacted during the whole of the Colonial period on more or less generous terms by the other American Colonies in connection with Indian forays and the more serious wars against the French. During the revolutionary period Virginia and Pennsylvania took the lead in promising disability pensions to those maimed in the war, and Congress itself, stirred thereto by Washington's persistence in demanding "half-pay and a pensionary establishment," enacted legislation granting pensions to disabled soldiers and to widows and orphans. The same generous treatment to those who have suffered for their country, and their dependants, has been shown by the United States in all their subsequent wars—that of 1812, those against Mexico and the Indians, the Civil War and the Cuban War. Unfortunately, during the nineteenth century this excellent principle received an exaggerated application. The results of the prodigious extension of

titles to pensions due to reckless legislation have thus been described by an American General: "It has come to pass that those who were merely on the rolls for a few days, and the malingerers and the deserters, all march as veterans of the great conflict upon a parity with the noble men who volunteered and fought to the finish." The effect of this reckless legislation has been that in 1899 the number of pensioners had reached the total of 991,519, the annual cost of pensions £27,671,010, with office expenses of £700,000 in addition, while in 1911, forty-five years after the Americans' last great war, the annual amount paid in pensions had risen to £32,000,000.

But striking as these figures are as an illustration of the evil of scattering pensions with indiscriminate profusion on the worthy and the unworthy, the just and generous forethought for those who have really suffered for their country must not be lost sight of in the United States pensions system. In this system the Americans have set an example to the world by undertaking in a more thorough manner than any other nation before this war, the care, as distinct from the pensioning, of the disabled soldier. Besides institutions for needy and homeless soldiers kept up at the public expense, as long ago as 1864 the principle was established of giving special rates of pension for special disabilities; in 1870 it was laid down that the State should provide an artificial limb or apparatus for loss of limb and that such apparatus should be renewable at the public cost every five years. Extra payments were also provided for aid and attendance on those requiring special treatment for their disabilities or to secure for them the help they needed in their

daily life. Such wise and humane provisions have now for the first time been accepted both here and in France as part of the duty of the State to its disabled soldiers.

In England, as in most foreign countries, the interests of disabled soldiers were for many centuries left to private charity. In feudal times the lord who brought his vassals to the king's army was expected to look after those who were wounded and the widows and orphans of those who were killed in his service. The monasteries, too, were always there to supplement the charity of a negligent feudal lord, while after the decay of the feudal system maimed soldiers looked almost entirely to those charitable institutions for care and sustenance. The dissolution of the monasteries left the maimed soldiers without any organizations prepared to look after their interests, and in Elizabeth's time, when hundreds of soldiers lost health and limbs in Flanders and in France, the duty was forced upon the State. Captains of forces in the Low Countries complained that they were expected to make provision for the sick and wounded, "whose charge has laid heavily on them," and the Queen was "troubled whenever she takes the air by these miserable creatures." Accordingly in the last ten years of her reign a series of statutes was passed making provision for "maimed, hurt, or grievously sick" soldiers; but as the obligation to raise a rate for this purpose was laid on the counties, there was a tendency for each county to evade the duty and pass on its wounded soldiers to the next.

During the Civil War Parliament made more generous provision for the soldiers wounded and for the

widows and orphans of those killed on their side, assigning the proceeds of sequestered estates as well as £100 a week from the excise for that purpose, and setting aside the Savoy and Ely House as a residence for maimed soldiers. On Charles II's accession these enactments became void, and, on the other hand, the hitherto neglected Royalist soldiers made loud complaints of the misery into which they had fallen. In 1662 a statute, which is of some interest to-day, was passed, enabling discharged soldiers to exercise a trade without completing their apprenticeship; but this was poor consolation for those too infirm to exercise any trade. Nevertheless, the institution of a standing army, to which, in spite of the low pay, it was necessary to attract good men, the number of invalids returned from the garrison of Tangier, and perhaps, also, the example of Louis XIV in establishing the Invalides, emphasized the necessity of making more systematic provision for disabled soldiers. In 1681 the King issued his Royal Charter establishing the great foundation of Chelsea Hospital.[1] The building was entrusted to our greatest architect, who completed it nine years later, as may be read in the inscription over its colonnade:—

"In subsidium et levamen emeritorum senio belloque fractorum condidit Carolus Secundus, auxit Jacobus Secundus, perfecere Gulielmus et Maria, Rex et Regina, MDCXC."[2]

[1] Chelsea Hospital was not actually opened for the reception of inmates till 1692.

[2] Two years earlier a beginning had been made in Ireland. In those days and during most of the eighteenth century troops quartered

Although Chelsea Hospital was inaugurated by the King, it must be confessed that it originally owed very little to royal or public munificence. The comparatively small sum raised by private subscriptions was for long supplemented neither by the King nor by the nation, and the hospital's endowment depended almost entirely on money paid compulsorily by the soldiers themselves in the form of poundage from pay, the contribution of a day's pay annually from the whole army, and poundage on the sale of officers' commissions. During the eighteenth century Parliament never did more than supplement these contributions from the Army when the fund for pensions was inadequate.

Since the date of Charles II's charter of 1681, the funds have been administered by the Commissioners of Chelsea Hospital, one of whom is always the Paymaster-General, and who allocate and distribute the pensions. The pensions depended on disability due to wounds or other hurt received in the service, or to infirmity after twenty years' service. The in-pensioners, originally 476, but subsequently increased in number, are lodged, clothed, fed and cared for in

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in that island were paid for out of Irish revenues and so were treated separately from those on the British establishment. In that year Charles II issued a Royal Charter for a hospital at Kilmainham for aged and maimed officers and soldiers on the Irish establishment. A grant of land was made in Phœnix Park, but otherwise the funds for pensions arose from voluntary subscriptions and the deduction of 6*d.* in the £ from the pay of the army in Ireland. Kilmainham Hospital was opened in 1684 and originally accommodated 300 pensioners, but its establishment has now been reduced to 140. Since 1794 it has been supported by grants from Parliament. There being now no army on the Irish establishment, its Governors deal only with the few in-pensioners at Kilmainham.

sickness and health at Chelsea, and have a small sum in addition as pocket money. From the outset, however, the accommodation in the hospital was not great enough for the number of men entitled to pensions. At first the men for whom there was no room were granted pensions until vacancies occurred for them at Chelsea; but very soon the out-pensioners far exceeded the in-pensioners in numbers, and this disproportion has continually increased. During the eighteenth century these out-pensioners were formed into "invalid companies," and, though mostly maimed or decrepit, were liable to be called up for service in time of war. In 1739, for example, the only soldiers allowed to Anson, when he set forth on his great voyage, were 500 pensioners, men "who, from their age or wounds, or other infirmities, are incapable of service in marching regiments." Anson was naturally "chagrined at having such a decrepit detachment allotted to him," all the more when he found that, even of these, all who had limbs and strength to walk out of Portsmouth deserted, leaving him only those who were literally invalids of sixty or seventy years old. The out-pensioners were originally entitled to 5*d.* a day, but for a long time were robbed of most of the benefit of that small pittance by the Commissioners' method of payment. This was by annual instalments in arrear; and, moreover, commissions on all pensions were charged by the Pay Office clerks. The result was that these unfortunate men's only means of livelihood during their first year on the pension list was by borrowing at exorbitant rates from money-lenders on the security of their pensions. This system was put an end to in 1754 by the greatest man

who ever held the post of Paymaster-General. William Pitt had long had it "much at heart to redeem these helpless, unthinking creatures from their harpies," and in that year passed a Bill providing that six months' pension should be paid in advance, that all future mortgages on pensions should be void, and that commissions should no longer be exacted by pension officers. By this Act the out-pensioners were at least no longer robbed of money to which they had themselves contributed a share during their service in the Army.

Windham's Act of 1806 for the first time secured a title to a pension for all soldiers invalided, disabled or discharged after fourteen or twenty-one years' service.[1] But the abolition of all contributions from Army pay was not effected till later in the nineteenth century, when the just principle was at last established that all pensions should be paid by the nation from funds voted specially for that purpose. Even after this tardy act of justice the pension rates still remained very low. At the time of the Crimean War disability pensions for wounds and injuries received in action ranged from 8*d*. (partial disablement) to a maximum of 2*s*. a day (for total disablement) for privates, while their service pensions after twenty-one years in the ranks could not exceed 1*s*. a day (those who had served longer could obtain 1*s*. 2*d*. a day). During the last half of the nineteenth century some slight improvements were made in these scales, and a new form of compassionate pension was introduced

[1] This Act, excellent in the principle it laid down, was found, in some respects, to be open to abuses. It was therefore repealed in 1826, when the power to make rules for out-pensions was entrusted, within certain limits, to the Commissioners of Chelsea Hospital.

for necessitous medallists of previous campaigns who had reached the age of sixty-five.

During the South African War, when we raised the largest army hitherto employed on foreign service, some improvements were made in the pension scale. For partial disablement a private could obtain as much as 2*s.* a day, and for total disablement 2*s.* 6*d.*, and the same pensions were extended to men discharged for disease incurred through their war service. During the South African War it was decided in 1901 to extend the grant of pensions to the widows and children of N.C.Os. and men dying through war service within twelve months of removal from duty. In 1903 cases of death from injury were included; and the period of twelve months was extended to two years in 1902 and seven years in 1907. These pensions ranged from 5*s.* to 10*s.* weekly, according to rank, for widows, and from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* for each child.

There are also three schools supported by Army funds for the education of soldiers' sons: the Royal Hibernian Military School, founded in 1769, the Duke of York's Royal Military School, founded in 1801, and the Queen Victoria School for Scotland, founded in 1908.[1]

But the chief reform of the South African War period was the grant for the first time of pensions to the widows and orphans of N.C.Os. and men killed or dying on service. Hitherto, except during the Commonwealth period, when 2*s.* a week was granted by Parliament to destitute widows of soldiers slain in battle, gratuities were the utmost they could receive

[1] The Royal Victoria Patriotic Asylum at Wanstead educates the daughters of soldiers and sailors.

from the State by the King's Bounty. In 1685 it was ordained that the widow of a soldier slain in fight might claim eleven months' pay for herself and one-third of that amount for each unmarried orphan, and if there was no wife a widowed mother, if indigent, might claim the same amount. Slightly increased gratuities were payable in the early part of the nineteenth century. In 1863, however, arrangements were made for the distribution of a fund known as the Soldiers' Effects Fund in the form of pensions to widows and children of N.C.Os. and men, the pensions ranging from 5*s.* to 3*s.* for widows and from 2*s.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* for children. But in practice these pensions were limited to the dependants of those killed in action. Moreover, they were not paid for by the taxpayer, and were allocated, not by the State, but by the Royal Patriotic Fund Commissioners. In 1881 pensions were for the first time granted directly by the State, but only to the widows and orphans of warrant officers, and the gratuities to widows and orphans of N.C.Os. and men were then also for the first time put on the Army Votes.

It has always been felt in England that the amount given by the State to disabled soldiers, veterans, and to their widows and orphans, was quite inadequate, and during almost every war special funds were raised by voluntary subscriptions to supplement the help given by the State. Such are Lloyd's Patriotic Fund founded in 1803, the Patriotic Fund founded in the Crimean War, and the Soldiers and Sailors Help Society which has done much to train disabled soldiers. With these funds means were available to increase pensions, support widows and orphans, give

special treatment to disabled soldiers and found homes and schools for their benefit. To avoid overlapping of these funds and secure their judicious employment Parliament constituted a permanent committee called originally the Patriotic Fund Association and afterwards the Royal Patriotic Fund Corporation, which had the duty of administering voluntary funds, deciding on the policy to be pursued and reporting annually to Parliament.

So far as the State was concerned, however, no attempt had hitherto been made to replace disabled soldiers in civil life or even to give most of them pensions enabling them to live as well as they might have, had they not been disabled.

§ 2.—*The Present State of Pensions*

Such, then, at the outbreak of war in August, 1914, were the provisions made for disabled soldiers and for the widows and orphans of those who had fallen. The allowances were quite insufficient for a decent livelihood, and no provision was made by the State for the special care and treatment of the disabled after discharge from the Army. Much, as we have seen, had been done by charity in the past to supplement inadequate allowances; and there is little doubt that the charitable would have been as readily moved in this war. But Parliament and the nation at once felt that it was their business to give adequate pensions and care to those who had been maimed for life in their country's cause. Early in the autumn a Cabinet Committee drew up a new scale of separation allowances and pensions, but Parliament thought these

proposals for pensions to be still inadequate, and in November appointed a Select Committee, with Mr. Lloyd George as chairman, to make further recommendations. The proposals of this Committee were adopted after discussion and embodied in a Royal Warrant of May 21, 1915. By the new scale at least 25*s.* a week was assured to the disabled private, with correspondingly higher rates for superior ranks, and an allowance, not exceeding 2*s.* 6*d.* a week, was for the first time granted to the children of a disabled soldier. The pensions to widows and orphans were also very considerably increased, a widow being entitled to 10*s.* or 15*s.* according to age, and the rate for orphans being raised to 5*s.* for the first, 3*s.* 6*d.* for the second, and 2*s.* for each additional child. Apart from the great increases in all these rates, the most interesting point to notice in this new scale is that some account is taken of a disabled man's earning capacity in fixing his scale of pension. The totally disabled man was to get 25*s.* a week from the State, the partially disabled man a sum which, with his earnings, would enable him to have at least 25*s.* a week. The objection, which was soon apparent, to this regulation was that the inducement to the disabled man to work was to some extent removed; this, apart from the increased charge to the nation, was not in the man's interest, since in many forms of disablement the need to work acts as a strong spur to induce a man to cure himself.

To remedy this and other defects found in the Royal Warrant of 1915, a new Royal Warrant was issued in 1917 in connection with the establishment of a Pensions Minister. In every category the pensions

were raised. For a widow the lowest rate became 13*s.* 9*d.* instead of 10*s.* a week, and an addition of 1*s.* 3*d.* a week was granted after the age of forty-five. For orphans, the eldest child still had 5*s.*, but the rate for the second was raised to 4*s.* 2*d.*, for the third to 3*s.* 4*d.*, and for each additional child to 2*s.* 6*d.* Higher rates were also fixed for the children of disabled soldiers; if the father was totally disabled the children being paid for on the same scale as orphans, and on a proportionately lower scale according to any lesser disablement of the father. But the most interesting changes were made in the principle of minimum pensions to disabled soldiers. In the first place the rate for the highest form of disability was raised from 25*s.* to 27*s.* 6*d.* for privates, and for lower forms the earning capacity proviso was abolished and the pensions fixed at rates varying from 22*s.* to 5*s.* 6*d.* a week according to the nature of the disability. For the future, therefore, whatever a man may be capable of earning, he has a claim to a fixed pension as long as his particular disability remains. On the other hand, various provisions are made to meet cases in which, owing to special circumstances, these minimum pensions are deemed inadequate, or where special allowances are necessary to secure further treatment or training:—

(i) Where a disabled man requires constant attendance a further allowance not exceeding 20*s.* a week may be made.

(ii) Where a disabled man can show that his minimum pension plus any allowance for children that he may have, plus the average earnings

of which he is still capable, makes a sum less than his average pre-war earnings, he may be granted a pension which together with average earnings of which he may be deemed capable shall not exceed his pre-war earnings, up to a maximum of 50*s*. per week plus half any pre-war earnings between 50*s*. and 100*s*. This proviso may best be understood by concrete cases. Take (A), a man with two children, who was earning £4 a week before the war and is now totally disabled :—

	£	*s*.	*d*.
For his total disablement his minimum pension is weekly	1	7	6
For his two children he gets	0	9	2
Total minimum weekly income . .	£1	16	8

Presuming he can now earn nothing, he can claim a pension of £2 10*s*. plus half his former earnings between £2 10*s*. and £4 (*i. e.* 15*s*.), making a total of £3 5*s*. Another man (B), partially disabled and without children, may have been earning £5 a week previously :—

	£	*s*.	*d*.
His disablement, let us assume, entitles him to a minimum pension of, weekly . .	1	2	0
While his average earning capacity is estimated at	1	0	0
Total minimum weekly income . .	£2	2	0

This man can claim a pension of £1 10*s*. This, added to his weekly earnings, gives him £2 10*s*. a week. To this sum the State adds half his former weekly earnings between £2 10*s*. and £5 (*i. e.* £1 5*s*.). Thus his total income reaches £3 15*s*. a week.

(iii) To encourage a disabled and discharged man to undergo curative treatment and such special technical training as is necessary to enable him to earn his livelihood special provisions have been inserted in the Royal Warrant. A man who is certified for further treatment and chooses to undergo such treatment and training receives while undergoing it a pension of 27*s.* 6*d.* a week, *i. e.* the sum which would have been given to him had he been totally disabled. If for the purpose of this treatment or training he has to leave home, his wife, children and dependants draw allowances at the most favourable rate, *i. e.* they draw as much as if the man had been killed in action.

There is no compulsion laid upon any disabled man to undergo curative treatment or technical education, but the inducements, apart from the special pension and allowances already mentioned, are pretty strong. For instance, unless the discharged and disabled man undergoes any medical treatment which is deemed necessary for him, he may lose half his pay and allowances.

As a further inducement to enter on a course of technical training, a pensioned soldier receives 5*s.* for each week spent at a recognized course of instruction, and his fees are paid for him. These two provisions are likely to save the State a good deal. Many a stiff arm nursed by a discharged soldier as being of high capital value will yield to treatment, and so allow of a pension being reduced, while every man

technically trained is an addition to the economic power of the country.

There are other provisions as to gratuities to discharged men for temporary disablement, to widows on re-marriage and also as to pensions to other dependants than wives and children—women, for instance, who have lived with soldiers without marriage, and illegitimate children. But the great importance of the Warrant of 1915, and still more of that of 1917 and of other subsidiary enactments, is that for the first time in our history provision is made by the State for the treatment and training of discharged and disabled soldiers, and that an attempt has been made to put them in as good a position in regard to their livelihood as they were in before the war. This forms the subject of the next chapter.

APPENDIX

(A) Disabled Men

Scale of Pensions and Allowances by Royal Warrant of March, 1917

(1) Pensions that may be granted for specific injuries (see Table, pp. 270–71).

(2) Allowances for children of disabled men under the age of sixteen (in some cases these allowances may be continued to the age of twenty-one).

	s.	*d.*
For a first child	5	0
For a second child	4	2
For a third child	3	4
For each child after the third	2	6

(3) If a disabled man can show that his pension plus allowances for children plus his earning capacity amount to less than his earning capacity before the war he may receive in lieu thereof a consolidated pension corresponding to that earning capacity but not exceeding 75*s.* a week.

(4) Half above pensions and allowances may be deducted if a man refuses to submit to medical treatment ordered.

(5) Temporary awards may be granted until a permanent assessment pension can be made. When a permanent pension has been granted it cannot be diminished.

(6) Special allowances are given while a disabled man is being trained for work both by an increase of his own pension and by extra allowances to wife and children: his training fees may be paid: and on the conclusion of his training he may be granted a bonus of 5*s.* a week for his training period.

(7) A grant not exceeding 20*s.* a week may be granted for attendance on a helpless pensioner.

(8) Provisions are also made for temporary allowances to disabled soldiers till pension is decided and in certain cases for gratuities in lieu of pensions.

(B) Widows and Dependants

(9) *Pensions to widows* of soldiers who in consequence of the present war either (*a*) are killed in performance of military duty, or (*b*) die as a result of wounds or injuries received in the performance of such

PENSIONS THAT MAY BE GRANTED FOR SPECIFIC INJURIES

Degree of disablement	Specific injury	Proportion corresponding to degree of disablement	Disablement Pensions						
			If not entitled to a Service pension					Warrant or N.C.Os. entitled to Service Pensions	Private, etc. (Class V) irrespective of Service Pension to which entitled.
			Warrant Officer (Class I)	Warrant Officer (Class II) or N.C.O. (Class I)	N.C.O. (Class II)	N.C.O. (Class III)	N.C.O. (Class IV)		
1	Loss of two or more limbs Loss of an arm and an eye Loss of a leg and an eye Loss of both hands or of all fingers and thumbs Loss of a hand and a foot Total loss of sight Total paralysis Lunacy Wounds, injuries, or disease resulting in disabled man being permanently bedridden Wounds of or injuries to internal, thoracic, or abdominal organs, involving total permanent disabling effects Wounds of or injuries to head or brain involving total permanent disabling effects, or Jacksonian epilepsy Very severe facial disfigurement Advanced cases of incurable disease	100 per cent.	42*s.* 6*d.*	37*s.* 6*d.*	35*s.* 0*d.*	32*s* 6*d.*	30*s.* 0*d.*	27*s.* 6*d.*	27*s.* 6*d.*

2	Loss of both feet Amputation of leg at hip or right arm at shoulder joint Severe facial disfigurement Total loss of speech	80 per cent.	34*s.* 0*d.*	30*s.* 0*d.*	28*s.* 0*d.*	26*s.* 0*d.*	24*s.* 0*d.*	22*s.* 0*d.*	22*s.* 0*d*
3	Short thigh amputation of leg with pelvic band, or of left arm at shoulder joint, or of right arm above or through elbow Total deafness	70 per cent.	29*s.* 9*d.*	26*s.* 3*d.*	24*s.* 6*d.*	22*s.* 9*d.*	21*s.* 0*d.*	19*s.* 3*d.*	19*s.* 3*d.*
4	Amputation of leg above knee (other than 3) and through knee or of left arm above or through elbow, or of right arm below elbow	60 per cent.	25*s.* 6*d.*	22*s.* 6*d.*	21*s.* 0*d.*	19*s.* 6*d.*	18*s.* 0*d.*	16*s.* 6*d.*	16*s.* 6*d.*
5	Amputation of leg below knee (including Symes's and Chopart's amputation), or of left arm below elbow Loss of vision of one eye	50 per cent.	21*s.* 3*d.*	18*s.* 9*d.*	17*s.* 6*d.*	16*s.* 3*d.*	15*s.* 0*d.*	13*s.* 9*d.*	13*s.* 9*d.*
6	Loss of thumb or of four fingers of right hand	40 per cent.	17*s.* 0*d.*	15*s.* 0*d.*	14*s.* 0*d.*	13*s.* 0*d.*	12*s.* 0*d.*	11*s.* 0*d.*	11*s.* 0*d.*
7	Loss of thumb or of four fingers of left hand, or of three fingers of right hand	30 per cent.	12*s.* 9*d.*	11*s.* 3*d.*	10*s.* 6*d.*	9*s.* 9*d.*	9*s.* 0*d.*	8*s.* 3*d.*	8*s.* 3*d.*
8	Loss of two fingers of either hand	20 per cent.	8*s.* 6*d.*	7*s.* 6*d.*	7*s.* 0*d.*	6*s.* 6*d.*	6*s.* 0*d.*	5*s.* 6*d.*	5*s.* 6*d.*

Note.—In the case of left-handed men, certified to be such, the compensation in respect of the left arm, hand, etc., will be as for a right arm, hand, etc., and *vice versâ*.

duty within seven years of receiving them, or (*c*) die of disease certified as due to active service.

	s.	*d.*	
For widows of Warrant Officers Class I. . .	21	3	weekly
For widows of Warrant Officers Class II. or N.C.O. Class I.	18	9	,,
For widows of N.C.O. Class II.	17	6	,,
For widows of N.C.O. Class III.	16	3	,,
For widows of N.C.O. Class IV.	15	0	,,
For widows of Privates, etc., Class V. . . .	13	9	,,

(10) Children of such widows receive allowances on same scale and conditions as the children of disabled soldiers. An increased scale is given in case of motherless children—*i. e.* 7*s.* for one, 6*s.* each for remainder.

(11) An analogous provision for alternative provision to widows is made—as in paragraph (3) above (pensions to disabled soldiers), the alternative pension not to exceed half such deceased soldier's alternative pension if he had lived to enjoy it.

(12) Gratuities are granted to widows of £3 to meet expenses due to soldier's death.

(13) Allowance of extra 1*s.* 3*d.* a week is given to widows on reaching age of forty-five.

(14) Extra allowance not exceeding 12*s.* 6*d.* a week may be granted to widows during training for work, and fees may be paid.

(15) Widows of disabled pensioners may receive half their husband's pension if not entitled to pension under paragraph (9).

(16) Further regulations are made for pensions to separated widows, unmarried wives, and other dependants of a deceased soldier.

CHAPTER XVII

THE CARE OF DISABLED SOLDIERS

§ 1.—*Preliminary arrangements.*

A PENSION, if fixed on a scale sufficiently generous, will save a disabled soldier from actual want. But he has a claim to something more: to be restored as far as possible to health and to the interests and occupations of civil life. In the past the State, in England, regarded the bestowal of a pension as the limit of its duty, and even that, as we have seen, did not err on the side of generosity. Any further help to enable a man to regain the position in life lost to him by his disability was left to private enterprise. Voluntary agencies have done good work in supplementing State pensions and in training and providing work for soldiers disabled in previous wars. In the past, indeed, the funds contributed voluntarily for these purposes have been on so generous a scale that they have often exceeded the needs of the war for which they were contributed. To obviate waste of such funds and to secure a regular administration of their proceeds in the form of supplementary pensions, training establishments, etc., the Royal Patriotic Fund Corporation, which had its origin at the time of the Crimean War, was established by Charter and

subsequently by Act of Parliament. To this corporation charitable funds raised for disabled soldiers, widows and orphans have been from time to time assigned in trust by Parliament, with certain powers of amalgamating surpluses and with full powers of administration. All these funds, however, administered by this corporation, have been raised at times when the numbers of maimed soldiers, orphans and widows were within comparatively reasonable limits.

From the outset of the present war it was apparent that the number of the maimed would be so large and the nature of their disabilities so varied that no voluntary agencies could cope with the many problems of their after-care and settlement in civil life. A return of discharged warrant officers, non-commissioned officers, and men disabled through the war between the outbreak of war and January 31, 1917, shows that then there were already 103,588 in this category, and it must be remembered that this return does not include men still in military hospitals, nor any officers.[1] Before the war is ended, even if it ends as soon as some hope, this total will certainly be more than doubled, for every day adds to the tale of disabled men, and some who have fought on apparently uninjured to the end will find that they have incurred some disabling disease which will prevent their ever being the men they were.

Apart from the large numbers, the many different forms and degrees of disability make the question of giving all disabled men the best chance in after-life

[1] By April 25, 1917, the total of all ranks (including officers) who had been granted pensions on account of disability amounted to 160,056.

one of extraordinary magnitude and complication. A mere enumeration of the rough categories into which the disabled are divided will to some extent show this.

Eyesight cases	Miscellaneous wounds and injuries
Wounds and injuries to legs (necessitating amputation)	Chest complaints
Wounds and injuries to arms and hands (necessitating amputation)	Rheumatism
Wounds and injuries to arms, legs and hands (not necessitating amputation)	Heart disease
Wounds and injuries to head	Epilepsy
Hernia	Nervous diseases
	Insanity
	Deafness
	Frost-bite
	Miscellaneous disabilities (Bright's disease, debility, etc.)

But even this long list does not give an exhaustive statement of the problem; for it may be said that every single case of disability has peculiarities of its own and requires individual care, not only in treatment but in adapting the disabled man to make the best use of his remaining energy.

Again, the restoration to civil life and the power of earning a livelihood is unfortunately not the only problem to be considered. Some cases of disability, such as paralysis or consumption, are of such a nature that the best that can be done for the sufferers is to make their lives as easy as possible by constant care and attention. For them the best form of nursing institution or of home-care has to be thought out. The blind, too, are in a special category, since, however expert they may be taught to become at certain occupations, they must always depend more on others than a man who is crippled.

From these considerations it became clear that if the disabled soldiers discharged from the Army were to be cared for as their services merited, the task was too great for private enterprise alone. Both in France and in England simultaneously the national conscience was stirred to the necessity of grappling with the problem in a large spirit. In France one of her greatest writers, Monsieur Maurice Barrès, came forward in the early days of the war to plead eloquently and work devotedly for the interests of crippled soldiers. In brief and moving words he sketched their needs and the right remedy to be found for their sad case :—

"Peace! What a cruel word that will be to the victim of war if we cannot help him to find his place in time of peace. It is hard to feel one's self different from the rest of the world. To the cripple attention and inattention, pity and indifference, are equally painful. His feelings are those of the young men, his former comrades, but he can no longer follow them. He cannot be happy among old pensioners, because his tastes, his illusions, and his feelings are those of a later generation. There is a danger that the disabled soldier may be doomed to loneliness, whereas his tastes are far different from those of the monk in his solitary cell.

"The remedy for this painful moral situation is work. The man gravely wounded, the man without an arm or a leg, the maimed soldier, can and should work. His need for work is even greater than the fit man's, and, if we help him, he will have the power."

At the same time he started a great national subscription, "L'Œuvre des Invalides de la Guerre," to

secure for disabled soldiers on their discharge from military hospitals :—

(1) The apparatus best suited to help them in their crippled condition.
(2) Schools and workshops to educate them for a trade.
(3) Employment in the trades for which they are found to be fitted.

In a few months £40,000 had been raised for this fund, but, not satisfied with that, M. Barrès urged week by week on the Government that these objects could only be adequately effected by the State. He spoke to willing ears, and France has now a national system for the care of disabled soldiers.

In England the call from all sides was no less insistent, and the Government met the demand for systematic care of disabled soldiers first by instituting an inquiry into the extent of the problem. A Committee was appointed, with Sir George Murray as chairman, to consider generally the best forms of treatment, training, and employment for disabled men discharged from the Army. Meanwhile the immediate need of doing something for men discharged in a maimed condition from hospital was pressing. The task of, in some measure, supplying this need was once more undertaken by private agencies, such as Lord Roberts's Memorial Workshops and St. Dunstan's Home for the Blind, while the Prince of Wales's Fund, raised by voluntary subscription, advanced money for cases of disabled soldiers which could not be met by other means, and thus helped materially to tide over the difficult period before arrangements by the State had been completed.

Sir George Murray's Committee reported in favour of a central authority to be charged with the duty of caring for disabled soldiers. Accordingly, in November, 1915, Parliament passed the Naval and Military War Pensions Act, in which the State for the first time recognized its responsibility for the treatment and care of disabled soldiers after their discharge from the Army. Under the Act this duty was delegated to a Statutory Committee of the Royal Patriotic Fund Corporation, assisted by local committees in every county and county borough. The Statutory Committee consisted of twenty-seven members appointed by the Crown, the Royal Patriotic Fund Corporation, the War Office, the Admiralty and other Government offices, and the Soldiers' and Sailors' Families Association, which, since the beginning of the War, has been in close touch with the wives and dependants of soldiers and sailors, and has helped to distribute separation allowances. Among these members it was laid down that there were to be some representatives of labour and some women. The functions of the Statutory Committee were, *inter alia*, to issue supplementary grants in cases where pensions (or separation allowances) appear to be inadequate, to perform sundry administrative duties in connection with pensions,

> "to make provision for the care of disabled officers and men after they have left the Service, including provision for their health, training, and employment," and

> "to make grants in special cases for the purpose of enabling widows, children, and other dependants

of deceased officers and men to obtain training and employment."

In these two last paragraphs is contained the germ of a State system of training to enable those who have suffered directly through the War to resume their civil occupation. To enable the Statutory Committee to carry out the work assigned to it, to pay supplementary grants, and to assist men requiring further treatment and training, Parliament voted a sum of £1,000,000. But it is implied in the Act that many of the expenses to be incurred by the Committee should be met out of funds raised privately. Its duty was not so much to supplant private institutions for the care and training of the disabled as to co-ordinate them, and only when necessary to supplement them. It also naturally fell within its scope to utilize to the full all the existing organizations of the State, such as the Education Department, the Health Insurance Commission, and the Labour Exchanges, in providing training and employment. It was, in fact, to be more a co-ordinating and advisory body than an administrative department.

It was soon apparent that the success of any measures taken for the care of disabled soldiers would turn largely on the efficiency of the Local Committees appointed to assist the Statutory Committee. While the Statutory Committee's function was to elaborate schemes and lay down general principles, the Local Committees have to deal with the men themselves, investigate their cases, and make proposals to suit each man's particular disability and circumstances. For this work many even of the Local Committees

were not easy enough of approach. In a small county borough, indeed, the Local Committee could well undertake the work of interviewing and dealing with individuals; but for counties, especially a county with a population like that of London, it was soon obvious that the Local Committee would have to delegate much of its work to sub-committees. Suitable areas of the sub-committees were not difficult to determine, since with a little adjustment they could be fitted in with the areas in which committees of the Soldiers' and Sailors' Families Association had helped in the distribution of separation allowances to wives and children of soldiers at the Front. In the County of London, with its population of over 4,000,000, there is one Local War-Pensions Committee and, subordinate to it, forty-six sub-committees distributed among the boroughs of the metropolis.

Soon after the Act establishing the Statutory Committee the Local Committees with their sub-committees were at work, interviewing candidates for supplementary grants, treatment, or training for work. The Local Committees have power to give assistance out of funds subscribed locally and to recommend cases to the Statutory Committee for assistance from central funds; often, too, by their knowledge of special hospitals, polytechnics, or training centres in the neighbourhood, they can recommend a disabled man to the institution, where he will obtain the treatment or training exactly suited to his needs. Finally, in accordance with an arrangement made by the Statutory Committee, all the Local Committees are in close touch with the Labour Exchanges of the district; in fact, a representative of a Labour Exchange often has

a place on the Committee. By this means it is often possible to place a disabled man in employment as soon as he has received all the treatment and training he requires for a new start in life.

The success of these Local Committees and Sub-committees depends very much on their composition. On every one of them some women and some representatives of labour find a place, and most of the members are appointed by the locally elected bodies, town councils, or county councils, as the case may be. Thus the interest of the locality in the work is secured and there is the less danger of red tape and bureaucratic methods in dealing with men, whose chief need is intelligent sympathy. In fact, these Committees are, as a rule, very human, informal bodies. When the man comes in to put his case the chances are that some member of the Committee knows him or his wife; a friendly talk ensues, and gradually the man's needs and wishes for the future are elicited, pertinent suggestions are made to help him, and he goes out with the feeling that he has friends who will see to it that the best possible is done for his welfare. If he has come to the stage of seeking employment, one of his difficulties may be that, owing to his disability, he is not capable of doing a full man's work. In normal times such a man would have found it difficult to obtain a place, the trades unions, for their own protection, insisting on a minimum wage, and the employers naturally stipulating, for their protection, that the men they employ must be capable of earning that minimum wage. To meet such cases there is a remedy provided by the Act. Joint panels of employers and workmen may be set up by Local Committees, not only

to advise a disabled man as to his prospect of getting into a trade, but also to determine how far, owing to his disability, the wage rules of the trade unions may in his case be relaxed. These panels judge, of course, entirely by the man's earning capacity, so that there is no danger of his being exploited at a cheap rate by a bad employer on the ground that his pension already gives him a livelihood.

The conduct of its business by a Local or Sub-Committee, though depending largely on its own good feeling, is governed in principle by regulations and instructions issued by the Statutory Committee. These directions are no mere formal rules, but form a common-sense guide to a Committee anxious to give "full and sympathetic consideration" to cases brought before it. There is perhaps an inevitable danger among those who have to administer public funds or provide relief in any form of their viewing with suspicion and treating without adequate consideration those who come to them for help. So far as the directions of the Statutory Committee and, it should be added, the method of envisaging their duties adopted by most Committees can prevent it, this danger is reduced to a minimum. The attitude already established towards applicants in search of help or advice is that they are seeking not charity or a favour but something to which they have more than a right by their past services.

The chief service of the Statutory Committee during its existence [1] has been this settlement of the

[1] The Statutory Committee's functions have recently (September 1917) been taken over by the Pensions Ministry; but the system founded by it remains.

organization for the care of disabled soldiers and its direction on suitably sympathetic lines. In organizing a system of care it had very great difficulties to contend with, partly from the necessity of co-ordinating scattered efforts all over the country, partly from the multitude of public departments and private organizations by the intermediary of which it has been obliged to carry out its work. Similar initial difficulties have been found in other countries. In France, for example, as Sir Henry Norman shows in his Report on the Treatment and Training of Disabled Soldiers there, besides voluntary organizations, four departments of State, the Ministries of the Interior, War, Commerce and Labour, were concerned with this business; and in consequence there was a deal of overlapping and unnecessary work, until a more satisfactory co-ordination of effort had been secured. With us the Statutory Committee found the following authorities partly responsible for work entrusted to it: the Education Department, the Board of Trade's Employment Bureau, the Health Insurance Commissioners, the War Office and the Admiralty; besides the Red Cross and St. John's Ambulance Societies and a great many other voluntary agencies. One of the earliest duties of the Committee was to investigate the facilities that could be offered by each of these bodies, to discover the gaps and fill them up, if possible, by extending old methods or encouraging the foundation of new institutions, and thence to evolve a co-ordinated system which would ensure that every case of disablement should be able to obtain adequate treatment, training and employment, if possible within convenient distance of a man's home.

The problem is not even fully solved when every provision has been made for the man's needs. They must be fully informed of the facilities offered them and means must be taken to ensure their using them. The mere question of information is not so easy as it may seem. The military hospitals are so much overwhelmed with work that if the staff can get through their business of curing their patients, that is as much as can be asked of them. With the best will in the world, they have no time to make arrangements for a man after his discharge, and without careful precautions the incursion of outsiders into a hospital to give the proper information and make suitable arrangements for a man's after-care is apt to interfere with the urgent work of the hospital. Hence it has sometimes happened in the past that men who would have been anxious to train themselves for good work have left hospital ignorant of the existence of Local Committees and of panels of employers and workmen ready to give them advice and provide help, and have drifted away and become lost before they could be told of the advantages within their reach. Now this is no longer possible. By arrangement with the War Office, a system has been devised whereby all particulars of the disabled man are taken before he leaves a military hospital and forwarded to the Local Committee near his home. As soon as he is discharged, it becomes the business of that Local Committee to get into touch with him immediately and advise him at once about any further treatment or training that he may require.

Even when the man knows of the chances of self-improvement open to him it is not always easy to

induce him to take advantage of them. When a maimed soldier is discharged from hospital, cured as far as he can be by the best surgical science, often his first inclination is, very naturally, to go home and rest after his sufferings, knowing that with his pension he will at least not starve. Most of these men soon tire of an idle life, even if they are not pinched for want, and begin to look round for some employment. Unfortunately at a time like this, when labour is very scarce, there are plenty of blind-alley jobs, requiring no skill, which tempt the disabled man by their ease and the fair pay they bring while they last. But they are at the best temporary, and when the man loses one of them he is thrown back on the world in a worse state than he was before, for in the precious early days after leaving hospital, when his remaining muscles could be trained and adapted to skilled work, he has allowed them to go slack; at a later stage re-training, if still possible, becomes much harder. Again, until recently, stern necessity may have hindered some from training themselves for a new career. The Statutory Committee, it is true, from the first had power in cases recommended by Local Committees to give additional allowances to men undergoing training and to pay their training fees; but each case had to be investigated on its merits and there was no definite promise made by the State that this assistance would be given. Many maimed soldiers, however anxious for better work, may have felt that they could not afford the time for an unremunerative period of training, before the certainty of receiving assistance had been made clear to them and when the chief need apparent to them was to supplement their pensions

and give up their invalid ways by undertaking any work that came to hand. Now this difficulty has been finally removed by the Royal Warrant of March, 1917. As we have seen above,[1] the State itself offers generous inducements to a maimed soldier to train himself for skilled work; he can not only obtain an increased pension and separation allowance for his family while he is learning a trade, but he also receives a bonus at the end of his period of training. And these advantages are no longer dependent on any decision by a Committee but can be claimed as a right by whoever chooses to avail himself of them.

We can now take a survey of the arrangements made for the care of disabled soldiers after their discharge from the Army, as they are at the present time.

§ 2.—*The Present System*

As long as a disabled soldier can derive benefit from what is termed in-patient treatment, he is retained in a military hospital, is still a member of the British Army and draws his pay, with separation allowances for any dependants entitled thereto. During this period the usual history of such a man is that on being brought home from the front he is sent to a first-grade hospital, where he is treated by specially selected physicians and surgeons; then he is transferred to an auxiliary hospital for further treatment during convalescence, and finally returned to a first-grade hospital to await his Medical Board. In many of the hospitals to which such a man is sent, special treatment is given to restore the use of nerves and muscles

[1] Pp. 267, 269.

atrophied after disablement or to encourage the use of others to take their place. Notable among these are the orthopædic hospitals.

A civil orthopædic hospital has for some time existed in London, but the first for military purposes was instituted at Liverpool early in the war, by Colonel Sir Robert Jones, C.B., R.A.M.C. This hospital contains 850 beds; the next to be established, at Hammersmith, 1000; others have now been opened at Aberdeen, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Leeds, Cardiff, Bristol, Dublin and Belfast, while it is proposed to open more, when suitable personnel is available. They will thus be dispersed in convenient centres throughout the United Kingdom. Colonel Jones has the general direction of all these hospitals and is gradually training a staff qualified to practise the special methods of the orthopædic system. Among the foremost to recognize the value of this system has been King Manoel of Portugal, to whom the nation owes much for his practical help in stimulating interest in the subject. He has publicly advocated the utility of these hospitals, has subscribed to them generously himself and induced others to do the same, and has undertaken a large share of office work in connection with their administration.

The treatment given at the hospitals is specially adapted for those who are crippled or suffer from some deformity or malformation owing to injuries received in war. In some cases amputation or some other surgical operation is necessary, but in all cases the speciality of the treatment consists in the gradual education of injured nerves and muscles by one or more of the following means: massage, electrical treatment, gymnastics and mechanical exercises involving

craftsmanship. Specialists supervise each of these processes, and for every individual case a gradual regimen is adopted after consultation among all the specialists concerned. From the educational point of view the most interesting process is that involving the exercise of some craft. At Hammersmith, for example, may be seen disabled men employed at such occupations as wood-sawing, carpentry, shoe-making, metal-forging, splint-making; some play in the Hospital band and all are taught to take their turn at waiting at table on their disabled comrades. These occupations are prescribed in place of the old forms of exercise on some apparatus with pulleys or on a stationary bicycle with free pedals, and are much more effective for curative purposes. Exercise with a mechanical apparatus is a dreary process, of which a man soon tires, allowing the machine to do most of the work; whereas the interest of a well-chosen occupation, at which the man exercises the same nerves and muscles almost unconsciously, enables him to use his crippled limbs much longer and to forget his disabilities in the work. Incidentally, too, this form of treatment helps a man to pick up a trade, which may be useful to him on discharge.

As long as it is necessary to keep a man under constant observation, as an in-patient, he is kept in the military hospital, where he can obtain the best treatment. In a great number of cases he is then completely cured, is discharged from the hospital and returned to his rank in the Army, of which he has never ceased to be a member. To take, for example, the statistics for one hospital alone: out of 1350 cases discharged in the course of a year no fewer than 997

were returned fit for the Army, leaving only 353 permanently unfit; and these figures are the more remarkable as they were all orthopædic cases, where the injury was some form of disability.

What, then, becomes of those who are discharged as permanently unfit, whether as maimed men, neurasthenics, epileptics, consumptives, or paralytics? It is by no means the case that these men cannot derive further benefit from medical or surgical treatment, even though there is no hope of their ever being fit enough to rejoin the Army. The question then naturally arises, why should not the further treatment they require be continued at the military hospital? The answer to this question is twofold:—

(1) A period comes in most cases, even of permanent disability, when treatment as an in-patient in a hospital, so far from helping a man, retards the progress of that recovery of which he is capable. Periods of enforced idleness, which are inevitable with such a régime, when even a man's activities are only brought into play to the order of doctors or nurses, are apt to sap his initiative and lessen the moral effort he requires to cure himself. The man's best chance is to be brought into touch with ordinary civil conditions, which make him realize that he must help himself and put forth all the energy he can. Even in cases of incurable disability, such as paralysis or consumption, a stage comes when a man can be better cared for in a special institution, where he is treated as little as possible as an invalid, than in a hospital where the chief aim is to cure cases as rapidly as efficiency permits.

(2) Even were it advisable in their own interests to

retain the permanently unfit for further treatment in military hospitals, the resources of the country would make it impracticable. In a war with casualty lists as long as those we see daily in the papers, the accommodation and medical staff available for military hospitals is barely sufficient for carrying out the minimum work required for treating all those at the in-patient stage. If those who could be equally well cared for as out-patients, and those who have to be classed as incurable, were also to be kept in military hospitals, the whole organization would break down irretrievably. The use of military hospitals in providing out-patient treatment for men discharged from the Army is another matter; this, as far as the exigencies of the Service permit, is encouraged by the army medical authorities, who provide all Local Committees with lists of military hospitals in their districts, including those where special treatment is given.

Let us assume, then, that a disabled soldier has reached the stage at which a medical board pronounces him permanently unfit for the Army and no longer in need of in-patient treatment. He still has an interval of three weeks before he is discharged from hospital and the Army. During that interval he is visited by some member of the Local Committee for the district in which the hospital is situated, who takes down all particulars about his previous occupation, the sort of work he would like to undertake when he is well enough, and other necessary personal details. This information is sent direct to the Local Committee of the district to which the man will go on his discharge. In addition to this information at the time of the man's discharge, a "treatment

card" giving an account of his disability and of the further curative treatment recommended for him is filled up by the medical officer in charge of the hospital and forwarded to the Local Committee, a copy of it being also given to the man. To ensure further that no disabled man should leave a hospital without full knowledge of the opportunities open to him for curative treatment and training under skilled instructors for future work, an Army Council Instruction has laid down that posters explaining the system should be prominently displayed in every ward of a military hospital and in command depôts.

On his discharge from hospital the man is sent home and then ceases to draw Army pay, but is entitled to a pension according to the degree of his disability and to any further allowance due to him or his wife or family.[1] It is the business of the Local Committee of his district to get into touch with him at once, and, guided by the information sent by the Committee member, who visited him in hospital, and by the medical officer's "treatment card," to recommend to him any further treatment that may be required. Men suffering from blindness, consumption, paralysis, neurasthenia, epilepsy, or insanity, though nothing further can be done for them in the military hospitals, will need continued treatment as inmates of some special institution; the arrangements for such cases will be described later. But the majority of cases of disabled men discharged from military hospitals only require out-patient treatment. This will vary according

[1] Until the rate of pension is decided, the man may receive a temporary allowance of 14*s.* a week, and for the first fortnight after his discharge his family continue to draw separation allowance.

to the circumstances of the case. Sometimes the panel doctor can supply all the care that is needed; sometimes the proper treatment will be found in the out-patient department of some neighbouring civil or military hospital. In such circumstances the man can be living at home, while his cure is being continued. But in some cases the treatment required may not be found in the neighbourhood; then the man would be sent away to a town, where the special facilities he needs are available, and under the Royal Warrant of 1917 he would be entitled, during the period of his further treatment, to an increased pension with extra allowances to his wife and family. To ensure that a man should undergo the treatment recommended to him, it is stipulated that half his pension may be subject to that condition.

Besides following the medical directions for a man's treatment the Committee also has to think of his future employment. Some men, though disabled, are still able to carry on their former work; a man, for example, who has lost a leg, would find no difficulty in returning to clerical work or to some forms of handicraft. But many, unfortunately, are so disabled that they can never undertake their former duties and would need a course of training to fit them for other work of which they may be capable. Such men would be advised as to their prospects of work and the training they should undergo by the Local Committee, or referred to a panel of employers and workmen acquainted with the conditions of trade in the district. Their training should begin as early as possible, to avoid the period of lassitude and moral degeneration which inevitably result from enforced idleness; in most

cases the training can be begun simultaneously with the course of out-patient treatment at some panel doctor's or hospital. At the orthopædic hospitals, as we have already seen, an important part of the curative treatment is the exercise of some handicraft: and these workshops will, as far as space allows, be made available for out-patients.

To meet the case of the out-patients, discharged from the Army, many of the orthopædic hospitals have made arrangements for classes in manual training to be run in connection with them and under some supervision from the medical staff, by local Technical Colleges and Polytechnics. At Liverpool, for example, classes have been started by the Technical Institute, in connection with the Alder Hey Orthopædic Hospital, in typewriting, wood-carving, and leather embossing, metal lathe work, telegraphy, cinema operators' work, cobbling, painting and gardening. At Cardiff, Birmingham and other hospital centres, the Technical Institutes have been equally forward in providing training classes for men under treatment for disability.

In London, which is especially well provided with Polytechnics and Technical Institutes, the governing bodies of these institutions have shown great anxiety to give training facilities to disabled soldiers. A system for making these facilities fully known and used has not yet been elaborated, but already much work is being done. At the Borough Polytechnic, for example, a three months' course in bakery and confectionery has been opened for them; at the Northampton Institute men are being trained in electrical switchboard work; at the Cordwainers' College at

Bethnal Green, bootmaking and repairing and leather work are being taught; at the Battersea Polytechnic there are training facilities for agriculture and motor-ploughing; and at the Regent Street Polytechnic, under the energetic initiative of Major Mitchell, men are being trained as engineer fitters, tinsmiths, coppersmiths, cinematograph operators, and for several other trades. The success of the methods employed can be seen from the following among many examples taken from the books of one of these Polytechnics :—

V. G. S., Dorsets. Left leg amputated below the knee. Trained in electrical work and placed as light and power attendant with Woolwich Ambulance Station. Wages 33*s.* a week and food.

G.H.S., West Surreys. Right leg amputated above knee. Trained in cinematograph operating and placed with Epsom Palladium Cinema at £2 per week.

S. A., Middlesex. Right leg amputated below knee. Went through a course of electrical work and placed with New System Telephone Company, at 35*s.* a week.

K., R.E. Leg amputation. Previously a bricklayer. Trained in architectural drawing and placed with Birmingham Corporation as Assistant Clerk of Works.

W. D., A.S.C. Right leg amputated above knee. Trained in metal turning and fitting and placed with Crossley's of Manchester at £2 6*s.* a week.

W. H. R., R.E. Right arm amputated. Trained in electrical work and placed with Croydon Electricity Works as switchboard attendant at 31*s.* 6*d.* a week.

Many private employers have also come forward

with offers to give disabled men apprenticeship training in their workshops, with a prospect of permanent employment when the period of apprenticeship is over. The Ministry of Munitions has also made it known to Local Committees that they may recommend disabled men with some previous knowledge of engineering as candidates for its advanced courses of instruction in tool-making, tool-setting, gauge-making and other highly skilled processes. During his period of training such a man receives £2 a week and is then drafted into munition works as a skilled workman. Other men with a slighter technical knowledge can also be given a simpler form of training by the Ministry.

Many disabled men, who before the War lived a country life, and others, too, who were previously employed in sedentary occupations, are anxious to work in the open air; and if their disability renders it at all possible, some form of agriculture is undoubtedly the healthiest and most hopeful occupation for them. Arrangements have been made with suitable farmers to undertake the training of such men, if they are previously untrained, and special allowances may be given by the State to the men during the period of training. For those requiring a more scientific agricultural education the Government have organized courses at two Agricultural Colleges and, if the experiment proves a success and the applications are numerous enough, similar courses at other colleges will be arranged. It is left to the Local Committee in consultation with farmers to sift out all such applications and to make a careful selection of the farmers to be entrusted with the training of such men as are sent to a farm. Many of those thus trained will be

able to find work on the land near their homes; for others a scheme of farm colonies for disabled soldiers is in contemplation.

After the disabled man's training is completed the Local Committee is responsible for seeing that he obtains the employment for which he is fitted. In many cases employment follows naturally upon training; employers who take disabled men as apprentices, farmers who train them for agriculture, the Ministry of Munitions which gives them technical instruction, will generally be able to find them work when the training is completed. In many cases a man has had his job reserved for him by his former employer, or he may find no difficulty in placing himself owing to his former connections. But there are many other cases where a search for employment has to be made. Then the Committee will consult the trade panel already mentioned or see that the Labour Exchange officials do their best to find suitable work. Happily there is a natural disposition among employers to help the disabled as much as they can; among all the demands for men made on the Labour Exchanges by employers between May, 1915, and December, 1916, it was stipulated in no less than 24,635 cases that discharged soldiers and sailors should be given the preference. From other returns for the same period it is clear that hardly any discharged soldiers, who had applied through Labour Exchanges, failed to be offered work.

There are two classes of disabled men, who, without requiring permanent institutional treatment, have to be kept as inmates of institutions for shorter or longer periods: the limbless, who are waiting to be fitted

with an artificial limb, and the blind. Since the War much advance has been made in the nature of the appliances provided for the limbless, owing to the unfortunately large demand that has occurred. Sculptors have devoted their skill to making these appliances lifelike, surgeons and mechanical inventors have studied the most effective apparatus to enable them to imitate the processes of natural movement. An exhibition was held of new appliances and the best were selected for use, although, as the art is constantly advancing and individual requirements differ, no standard patterns have yet been finally adopted. When a man has had an amputation the case is reported to the Central Registry for Limbless Soldiers, and when the stump of his limb is sufficiently recovered to be fitted with an artificial limb a further report is sent in. As soon as a vacancy occurs at a fitting hospital the man is sent to Roehampton or one of the other hospitals for the purpose, which have been opened in Scotland, Ireland and Wales. Here careful measurements are taken in each case and artificial limbs manufactured to exact specifications. While the man is being fitted and becoming accustomed to the new apparatus, he is kept in the hospital. Here his time is not wasted. Particulars are taken of the employment to which he wishes to devote himself or, if he is uncertain, advice is given to him as to the job best suited to his disability. When the choice has been made, he will find facilities in the hospital itself for beginning to learn his new trade.

The most important of these limb-fitting hospitals is at Roehampton, the history of which illustrates the combination of private benefaction and State aid

apparent in everything connected with the care of disabled soldiers. The hospital is a private house lent by the owner, one of the Wilsons: funds for its maintenance were found by private subscriptions, to which the Labour Party contributed £10,000. The artificial limbs are made at the expense of the Government, and a capitation grant is paid for each inmate by the Pensions authority. Most of the equipment used for training purposes is given by private individuals. Here no man is hunted into a job, but the energetic secretary in charge of training, by lectures and private talks, induces nearly every patient to fit himself for some employment. There are classes in basket-making, carpentry, clerical work, electricity, engineering, metal work, motor mechanics and driving, and at the Brighton annexe one in commercial training; for other subjects men are sent out to neighbouring Polytechnics and Technical Institutions. Many men can pick up enough during their sojourn at the hospital to go straight into a trade on leaving, others go for a further course to a Polytechnic. For nearly every man the secretary finds either a job or the promise of one after further training. Of the 5811 who had passed through the hospital during a year and a half—

1294	were placed in employment by the hospital.
2037	returned to old jobs.
1783	were passed on to Local Committees for employment near their own homes.
Total . 5114	

Some typical changes of occupation resulting from technical training at this hospital are interesting.

	Former Occupation.	*New Occupation.*
(1)	Plater	Commercial instructor.
(2)	Master chimney-sweep	Clerk.
(3)	Outfitter's assistant	Chauffeur.
(4)	Regular Army	Chauffeur.
(5)	Warehouseman	Chauffeur,
(6)	Labourer	Mechanic in motor works.
(7)	Brass finisher	Switchboard attendant.
(8)	Gardener	Switchboard attendant.
(9)	Storekeeper	Cinema operator.
(10)	Farm labourer	Cinema operator.
(11)	Gardener	Antique furniture restorer.
(12)	Regular Army	Cabinet-maker.
(13)	Worker in flour mill	Fancy leather-bag maker.
(14)	Collier	Leather worker.
(15)	House painter	Suit-case maker.
(16)	Gun-maker	Laboratory attendant.

Legless men, as might be expected, have a greater choice of trades and are easier to place in employment than armless men. The following statistics of employment found for Roehampton men illustrate this fact :—

Illustrations of Employment found for Men who have lost an Arm.

Clerical.
Commissionaire.
Gateman.
Gymnastic instructor.
Labour master in workhouse.
Liftman.
Lodge-keeper.
Messenger.
Porter.
Railway work (sundry duties).
Scholastic.
Telephone switchboard attendant.
Timekeeper.
Traveller.
Ward master.
Watchman.
Weighman.

Illustrations of Employment found for Men who have lost a Leg.

Bootmaking.
Caretaker.
Chauffeur.
Domestic service.
Electrical work.
Engineering.
Gateman.
Groom.
Hall porter.
Hospital orderly.
Industrial work (sundry forms).
Liftman.

Employment found for Men who have lost a Leg—continued.

Light duties at pit-head (for miners).	Railway work (varied).
Lodge-keeper.	Road work.
Munition work.	Tailoring.
Milker.	Telegraphy.
Packer.	Telephone attendant.
Painter.	Timekeeper.
Postal.	Vanman.
Printing.	Watchman.
	Weighman.

The blind have been fortunate enough to find a generous and most capable friend in Sir Arthur Pearson, who, some years ago, himself became blind, and by his own courage and determination in "teaching himself to be blind," as he expresses it, has gained a priceless experience for dealing with men in similar circumstances. In April, 1915, he opened St. Dunstan's Hostel, a large house in Regent's Park, with fifteen acres of ground attached, which was presented to him by a wealthy banker for the training of the blind. Other houses in the vicinity have since been added, and there are convalescent homes for the blind at Brighton and Torquay, also under Sir Arthur Pearson. In these homes over three hundred blinded soldiers are under training at a time. For these a capitation grant is made by the Government, though the equipment, as well as the houses themselves, have been paid for privately. Sir Arthur Pearson himself supervises everything, and with Lady Pearson entertains the blinded officers, who are also there, at his own house. A particular feature of his system is to have blind instructors in all the training classes, as he has found that blinded men lose their feeling of helplessness and learn to adapt themselves to their

new circumstances much more readily when they realize that the man who is teaching them has been through it all himself. The first thing which they have to learn is "how to be blind," *i. e.* they must understand the extent to which they can still be self-dependent. This capacity they soon acquire at St. Dunstan's, and it is wonderful to see there how quickly blind men can steer themselves about and learn to use their hands at unaccustomed work. The training is divided into two sections, that of the class-room and that of the workshop, each of which the men attend daily. But the hours of work are short, two and a half in the morning and two in the afternoon; for blind men, especially at first, work under a greater strain than those who can see, owing to the need of more intense concentration on whatever they are doing.

In the class-rooms men learn to read and write Braille. This is not always easy, for it is a mistake to suppose that a blinded man acquires rapidly a specially sensitive touch; indeed some ten per cent. fail altogether. They also learn typewriting, and as a rule acquire this art with great rapidity; on leaving, every man who passes the typewriting test is presented with a machine for his own use in corresponding with his friends. Some of the more highly skilled are taught on a specially constructed typewriter to write Braille shorthand and obtain a speed of well over one hundred words a minute. Such men can earn a good living as secretaries.

In the workshops various trades are taught. The largest number of men learn cobbling, and many rapidly become very proficient at the trade. Mat-

making is often taught to the same men, so that when one business is slack they can turn to the other; some of the dullest, however, learn only mat-making. Others are trained in basket-making, and have their instruction specially directed to the manufacture of the type of baskets most needed in their own districts. There is also a joiner's shop, where men are taught to make picture frames, tea trays, corner cupboards, ornamental tables, etc., with extraordinary skill.

In the grounds of St. Dunstan's is a successful poultry farm where the management of fowls is taught on practical lines. The men learn to distinguish various breeds by the touch, to manage incubators, to prepare and truss fowls for the table, to fatten them, and, in short, to run poultry-keeping on profitable lines. Assistance is secured for them by an arrangement which makes it possible for their wives and dependants to learn the same art gratuitously at a large poultry farm in the Midlands.

The more intellectual men are taught other occupations. One of these is massage. The pupils first acquire some knowledge of anatomy, physiology and pathology at St. Dunstan's and then pass to the Massage School at the National Institute for the Blind. They are also allowed to visit patients in hospital and practise massage on them. Altogether fourteen blinded men have passed the examinations of the Society of Trained Masseurs and have joined the Almeric Paget Massage Corps. All of them have obtained situations at military hospitals at a wage of £2 10*s.* a week, and have proved at least as efficient as their comrades who can see. Another of the more highly skilled trades taught is that of the telephone

operator. A blind man cannot, of course, operate in exchanges where the flash-light system is used, but can be most efficient in private exchanges with the drop shutter system, where his sense of hearing can do all that is required.

Education is given in play as well as work. The blinded soldiers at St. Dunstan's walk, row, swim, dance, play push-ball, dominoes, draughts, chess and cards. They have a debating society, learn singing, and play various instruments.

When a pupil leaves St. Dunstan's he is placed in employment and is given a complete outfit of tools and raw material for the industry he has learned. If necessary, a market is found for his goods, either at St. Dunstan's or at some local shop. Moreover, he is constantly visited by instructors from St. Dunstan's and his work inspected; for a blind man's work is apt to deteriorate unless it is constantly watched. An adequate sum of money is set aside for this work of supervision, which is intended to be permanent. The average earnings of a blind man are over £1 a week, many earn more than £2, and with their disability pensions are well able to live in comfort.

Sir Arthur Pearson's hostels at St. Dunstan's and elsewhere [1] afford the best example of successful work for our disabled soldiers. A scientific system carried out with loving care for every detail is the note of these establishments. There is no foolish sentimentality, but sane and sympathetic treatment has done wonders for men stricken with one of the most

[1] At Newington House, Edinburgh, by arrangement with St. Dunstan's, all Scottish blinded sailors and soldiers are in future to be trained.

grievous disabilities for a man in the full vigour of his manhood.

§ 3.—*Treatment of Special Forms of Disability*

The cases of disability that we have hitherto been discussing, sad as they are, allow of more hope than some of the grievous cases we must now consider. Such are paralysis, epilepsy, neurasthenia, insanity and consumption. Some of these forms of disability are, from their nature, almost incurable, and although no good purpose would be served by keeping the sufferers for prolonged periods in military hospitals, they all require more care and attention than is possible with out-patient treatment. To provide this care and attention was a hard problem, and is only now in a fair way to be solved. The number of such cases was difficult to estimate: neurasthenics, for instance, in such numbers as the war produced had never been known before. At first some attempt was made to deal with such cases by the ordinary methods of peace time: consumptives, for example, it was arranged with the Local Government Board and the Health Insurance Commission, should be admitted to sanatoria in the control of those departments. But the difficulty in the past with that class of patients had always been that their numbers exceeded the accommodation available, and even by postponing the claims of civilian patients it was impossible to find room in existing sanatoria for all the soldiers affected by consumption as a result of the War. In all these cases, therefore, of special disability the Statutory Committee was obliged to rely chiefly on institutions established by voluntary effort; but it soon became

clear that there was great need of co-ordination and expansion of the facilities available.

Soon after the establishment of the Pensions Ministry a Committee was appointed by the Minister to organize a system of institutional treatment for these cases of special disability. The four members of this Committee—Sir A. Griffith-Boscawen, the Hon. Arthur Stanley, Sir Walter Lawrence, Mr. Cyril Jackson—represent the Pensions Ministry, the Red Cross, the War Office and the Statutory Committee respectively, and they have the assistance of four specialists: Sir John Collie for neurasthenics, Dr. Fox-Symons for paraplegics, Dr. Bond for epileptics, and Dr. Hartley for consumptives. The business of this Committee is to secure accommodation and arrange for the best treatment for those suffering from these disabilities. Much of their work they found already begun on the right lines, but in some respects they have to start from the beginning and have not yet completed their arrangements.[1] The following brief summary will, however, give some idea of how the system will work when it is completed.

Generally speaking, all the institutions established, or to be established, are to be run on a joint basis of public and private finance. The buildings and equipment are the gift of the Joint Committee of the Red Cross and St. John's Societies, which are maintained by voluntary subscriptions; the upkeep of the patients will be provided from State funds by the Pensions Ministry. Otherwise the institutions will be conducted on special lines suitable to the disability with which they are concerned.

[1] This was written in April, 1917.

(a) *Paraplegics* (*Paralytics*)

The condition of men almost totally paralysed by a wound in the head or spine is one of the saddest outcomes of war. There is often little to be done for them except to make them as comfortable and interested in life as their helplessness permits. In a poor home, where space is limited and the wife or sister has little leisure beyond her household cares, the needful attention is difficult to secure. Often, therefore, the best that can be done for such men is to find a cheerful building in which to live with good food, amusements, and above all sympathetic attendants. For this purpose a building on an ideal site, the Star and Garter Hotel at Richmond, was acquired by the Auctioneers' and Estate Agents' Institute and presented to Her Majesty. It stands on the edge of Richmond Park, on a hill open to all the air and sun, its principal rooms looking out over the Thames Valley, which here makes one of the noblest views in the world. There is at present accommodation for sixty-four patients, but, when the old hotel has been rebuilt according to plan, there will be room for 250. In the first year from the date of opening, on January 14, 1916, 112 men were admitted. Most of the patients sent there are scheduled as incurable, but the staff of the hospital never admit this, and by various methods of treatment, electricity, X-rays, massage, etc., and loving care have been successful in improving the condition of many. Thus, of the first 112 no less than twenty have been discharged as fit to go to their homes.

Queen Mary's "Star and Garter" Home is admirably equipped with all the comforts that these men need; and there is a large staff of male and female

nurses in attendance day and night. The medical officer in charge is an enthusiast for his work and his patients, and does much to render their lot more tolerable by his sane optimism. There is a special fund to pay the travelling expenses of relatives wishing to visit their wounded; there is a library of 3000 books, from which the men can choose: efforts, too, are successfully made to interest them in light work, of which they are capable, such as basket-making, knitting, and the making of salmon flies, on which the medical officer in charge, a great fisherman, is an authority. Cigarettes, tobacco, flowers and pets, such as canaries, parrots, and love-birds, constantly find their way to the wards from known and unknown donors; a proffered monkey was not admitted, but great joy came from a child's offering of an egg laid by a Richmond-born hen on the roof of a house near the British Museum. Even outdoor pleasures are made possible by generous benefactors who arrange theatre parties and river trips for those able to be moved with their due supply of air-cushions, wheeled chairs and other conveniences.

Since the establishment of this hospital its accommodation has unfortunately not been found adequate to the number of paraplegics. Other institutions, accordingly, are being arranged for on the same lines in other parts of the country.

(b) *Epileptics*

Epilepsy, though generally a congenital malady, may be considerably intensified by the nerve-shattering experiences of the trenches. In certain occupations epileptics may find employment which is not

seriously interfered with by their disability, especially those where a healthy out-door life is led, such as agriculture. But in a factory a man subject to epilepsy is a danger to his comrades and himself, and if he is only skilled for such an occupation he needs special care. Sometimes, also, the attacks are so severe that the only course is to keep the patient under observation and give him special treatment. To meet the case of discharged soldiers in such a condition the Pensions Ministry have arranged to open an institution at Chalfont St. Giles, where the patients will have the advantage of medical care by the staff of the neighbouring Civilian Home for Epileptics, and at the same time will be able to enjoy the healthy outdoor life so necessary for them.

(c) *Consumptives*

The original idea of drafting discharged soldiers suffering from advanced tuberculosis to the ordinary sanatoria has now been abandoned for the reasons already given. It was felt that men who have suffered on the battlefield should not be put in the position of waiting for the necessary care, which, if given in time, may cure them, until accommodation for them was available. It has, therefore, been decided to open special institutions for them. The Local Government Board are, therefore, investigating the accommodation available for advanced cases of tuberculosis all over the country with a view to their being dealt with in pavilions or annexes to existing hospitals. Sometimes treatment, as distinct from the institutional treatment of advanced cases, is provided in sanatoria

by the National Health Insurance Commission and the Local Government Board.

(d) *Mental Cases: Neurasthenia and Insanity*

"Cases of nervous and mental shock," writes Lieutenant-Colonel W. Aldren Turner, M.D., F.R.C.P., "may be counted among the more interesting and uncommon clinical products of the present War." Almost from the outset of the War such cases began to come into our hospitals and were found to be due sometimes to the bursting of heavy shell near the man, to his burial under earth and débris, or to the effects of noxious gases; in other cases to nervous exhaustion due to sleeplessness, fear, anxiety, or other prolonged strain. Towards the end of 1914 Sir A. Keogh sent a special medical officer over to France to report on the number and nature of these cases and suggest the best form of treatment for them in France and at home. As a result of this officer's report it was decided to label all such cases at the base hospital and send them for treatment in England at hospitals for nervous diseases under the care of neurological experts.

The system now adopted with such cases, while they are under military care, is as follows: At the base hospital a distinction is made between neurological cases (neurasthenia, functional paralysis, hysteria, etc.) and grave mental cases bordering on, if not actually, insanity. The neurological cases are sent to one of the clearing hospitals for such disorders at home and there treated. If the case is a light one, the patient may be rapidly cured by a course of rest and good feeding and returned to duty after a furlough;

if more severe, he will be sent to one of several special hospitals for nervous diseases where further treatment is given. Cases of mental disorder go to another clearing hospital, and unless signs of improvement occur, are sent on to the military hospital for such cases either in England or in Scotland. These cases of mental disorder often prove responsive to medical treatment, and as long as there is any hope of improvement they are kept in a military hospital; but when they are manifestly incurable they are discharged to an asylum.

A man suffering from neurasthenia, who does not prove amenable enough to treatment to enable him to return to the Army, is discharged from the special hospital where he has been treated and returned to civil life. But such a man is not sent off to the ordinary Local Committee for advice on his further treatment; he is brought before a special medical board, presided over by Sir John Collie, which has its headquarters in London, and sends out members to examine discharged neurasthenics in other towns. This board and its local delegations consider the cases, not only of men immediately they are discharged, but also of those who have been given short renewable pensions until the degree of their disability has been finally ascertained. These boards recommend to the men special forms of treatment suitable for them, can order gratuities from the pensions fund for those whose disability is not likely to be permanent, and make recommendations for the final scale of pensions to which each such man is entitled.

Work and interest in extraneous life are the best cure for such cases. One of the worst services that

can be rendered to them is to lavish injudicious sympathy upon them. From the nature of the disorder the man is apt to pity himself unduly and to welcome greedily well-meaning but ill-advised attempts to make him think himself incapable of exertion. Chiefly in order to save such men from their friends and to give them the bracing treatment they require, a home for neurasthenics discharged from the Army has recently been opened by the Pensions Ministry at Golders Green. This hospital has cost some £6000 to put in order, and is hired by the Red Cross Society at a rental of £500 a year. The upkeep is paid for by the Pensions Ministry. The staff of the neighbouring Maida Vale hospital for nervous cases will be at hand to treat the patients. Besides medical appliances such as electrical apparatus and whirlpool baths, and facilities for psychotherapeutist treatment, a leading feature of the place will be the workshops for basket-making, joinery, bootmaking and carpentry and fifteen acres suitable for agriculture; and all the patients will be encouraged to work. The number of patients is limited to one hundred, and no man will be allowed to stay there more than three months. During that period wise and sympathetic treatment and insistence on work will have cured the vast majority even of the most obdurate cases.

In the preceding pages some attempt has been made to trace the gradual improvements made in the scale of pensions and the treatment of the disabled since the War began. For the first time in our history the whole nation has been at war, and perhaps for this

very reason the calamities and distress that fall on individuals, who are fighting for us, and on their families, have been brought home to us all more clearly. However that may be, it is a fact that we have now for the first time anything approaching an adequate national system of pensions and of after-care for those maimed in battle. There are, no doubt, still many gaps in the system and many deficiencies which only time and experience can remedy; but there are at least the foundations of a sound financial and therapeutic system in the interests of those who have deserved well of us.

It will be noticed from this narrative that the improvements, which have been gradually effected, have been due to a combination of private endeavour and State action. Even now there is no rigid distinction between the part of the State and of the private benefactor: each is dependent on the other. What is lost thereby in symmetry and logical exactness of system is compensated for by a minimum of dull routine and by the introduction of a cheerful human element into a concern where constant freshness of outlook and sympathetic study of individual cases are essential to success. With such a combination there is every prospect that the care of those who should be sacred to us will not be stereotyped into a dull process of issuing doles over a counter, while the occasionally foolish and harmful actions of unthinking sentimentalists will be curbed by the orderly dispositions of enlightened officials and men of science.

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